AFGHANISTAN:

SOME DOCUMENTS OF THE BLOODY AND TRAITOROUS JEHADI YEARS

1992-1996

Published by:
The Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA)

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This book is dedicated to the families and relatives of all the victims of the traitorous and bloody years of the Jehadi rule. We hope that the unhealed wounds in their hearts caused by the martyrdom and abuse of their loved ones and devastation of their identity, will not discourage them, even momentarily, in their efforts to bring Sayyaf, Gulbuddin, Qanouni, Khalili, Fahim, Chakari, Anwari, Dostum, Mohaqiq, Dr. Abdullah and all other treacherous criminals to trial and punishment.

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FOREWORD

"I did not spend these days of massive imprisonment in mourning the ruins or praying persistently to the heavens, but I spent them in gathering our accumulated data and statistics, the wealth no triumphant enemy can take from us, memories…yes memories."

Romain Rolland

When after the collapse of Najib's puppet regime, the regime of Jehadi gangs and their partners doomed the city; perpetrating treachery, robbery, murder; and all kinds of degradation, abuse and rape of women all around the country (especially in Kabul); the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA) allocated most of its publication activities for the reports of the actions of these murderers in political power. Despite attempts by the government to suppress reports, RAWA knew that their insertion in "Payam-e-Zan" and other media would have historical value. In those years, our nation undoubtedly was the loneliest and most forgotten in the world. The proprietors of governing executioners were getting pleasure from the intoxication that came with the unbridling of their chained dogs. The destruction of the country in such an insane manner was to prepare Afghanistan and the region for their maneuvers. At the time, a complete reflection of the Kabul bloodbath in the international media was not in the interest of the United States and its allies. In addition, the criminal gangs installed in Kabul were counted as the old creations of the CIA, and their exposure would embarrass the United States and the West in general. The U.S. was investing its time in the training of hundreds of Afghans as future cadres for governing Afghanistan and it did not want the top Jehadi leaders to be completely exposed as devoted servants who were very important for building the future puppet regime.

Most intellectuals who were previously serving Russians and their dogs, as per their timidity and unfaithfulness chose to assimilate with the Jehadi criminals. Due to the oppression of information, they rarely published anything

more than harmless fake-groans that never pointed towards the Jehadi executioners. Therefore RAWA's publications, even according to its enemies, were counted as the most important source of news of the destructive and treacherous actions of religious fascistic gangs. RAWA wrote not from an ethnocentric and anti-democratic perspective but from a secular and revolutionary point of view.

Now RAWA, in this present collection, is publishing a selection of those reports along with some articles from other reliable sources. This work is valuable especially in the current situation. After knocking down the savage regime of the Taliban that had thrust us back to the Middle Ages, America installed the people responsible for the April 28th catastrophe on the throne. But the US refused to be satisfied with this alone. One of the most deceptive senior criminals, Ahmad Shah Massoud, was referred to as a "National Hero, May He Rest in Peace". The government, parliament, and the judiciary have all been occupied by those elements from whose hands and faces the blood of thousands of our helpless people is dripping; they are robbers of our national assets and have garrisoned a vast Mafia octopus system. The ostentatious and compromising intellectuals and technocrats, brought from the West, have had no positive impact on the puppet, inhumane and deeply corrupt government. They only know how to pay tributes to these criminals and stoop before the destructors like slaves so as to not lose their positions. If one day the situation is not in their favor, they will return calmly and smilingly to the countries in which they have obtained citizenship, and they will do so with a bag full of dollars.

Even if there wasn't an uprising by our people, even if our intellectuals have been swept away by an unprecedented flood of crime, good life, in spite of the silence of a world that cares not what our people suffered during the years of bloodshed and betrayal, the chiefs of the "Northern Alliance" know that our people will never forget their treachery toward Afghanistan, and that one day the anger, obsession and sleeping hatred of our silent masses will turn into a storm and will vanquish them in its horrible waves. That is why in association with traitors of the country -Parchami, Khalqi, Taliban and Gulbadinis- they passed the *National Peace Charter* in the parliament, thereby in their imagination, denying people the right to legally prosecute them, forever.

Executioners like Sayyaf, Rabbani, Chakari and Ismail have declared several times that they are not afraid of trial. If this is really the case then why have they passed a law that gives them immunity from being brought to any form of justice? But as the saying goes: "the traitor is timid". Their "National Peace Charter" proved that the butchers of our people are suffering from the fever and shiver of death, especially now that they have seen the hanging of their double, Saddam on the gallows.

Recently these criminals, with unique impudence, put forward Chakari, one of the senior terrorists who supervised the burning of books during the four years of their emirate, claiming that the allegation of his criminality is vain because no documents or witnesses exist. Sayyaf said, in his familiar bugger style said: Do the killed people say who has killed them?

The present book is a testament to the blood of tens of thousands of resident of Kabul and other provinces dripping from the mouths of Rabbani, Sayyaf, Dostum, Gulbuddin, Qanouni, Dr. Abdullah, Fahim, Anwari, Muhaqiq, just to name a few; it is saying that these betrayers destroyed Kabul, that these roguish people raped the innocent girls and women and young boys of Kabul or forced them to painfully commit suicide; the present book is saying that our national assets and museums and shops and houses were looted by these ill essences.

It is clear that this book contains only a small part of documents and evidence from limited sources stating the crimes during the four years of Jehadi's emirate. In spite of this, if a relatively free and democratic government without the stain of fundamentalism existed in this country, even one of the stories of this book is enough to convict all of the heads of the fundamentalists' gangs. The arrival of that day will not be too far, one should have this book and endeavor for its enrichment.

After many years of struggling and provision of witnesses and documents, RAWA prosecuted Zardad, a Gulbuddini and at last succeeded in removing that filthy assassin from his commercial firm in London and placing him behind bars in that city. Now RAWA is assured that Zardad's instructors and fathers, people like Rabbani, Sayyaf, Qanouni, Khalili, Dostum, Mohaqiq, Farooqi can be brought to justice; with reliance on the testimonies in this book and on the laws of legal and judicial associations of certain countries. To realize this wish, we appeal to

the pro-democracy and anti-fundamentalism parties and individuals to tear out the curtain of conservatism and self-deceiving words and instead of harmless jeremiads, focus on the direct and continuous exposure of Jehadi criminals here and abroad, and narrow the arena available for them. Those organizations and individuals may preserve their probable disagreements with RAWA, but whether independently or jointly with us, they should not lapse from actively striving to bring the bloodiest and most villainous patricides to justice.

The government under the command of Karzai tries to obstruct the opening of thick files documenting the crimes and treachery of Jehadi, Khalqi, Parcham and even Taliban chiefs, and shamelessly excuses itself under the pretense of "National Unity". It is the duty of the citizens of this country who love freedom, democracy and social justice and are anti-fundamentalists to make an effort in any possible and effective manner to defuse this covering up by the government. Through the exposure, rejection and unremitting demand for the retribution of vicious patricides of any fabric, take part in the creation and strengthening of the purest and firmest national unity and the reconstruction of our ruined homeland.

Publication Committee of
The Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan
June 2007

NOTES AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The documents and facts taken from various sources, are all of and related to the bloody and traitorous years of emirate (April 1992-September 1996). Therefore, they are not about the Russian invasion or puppet regime of Khalqis and Parchamis. Neither are they about the emirate of the backward Taliban nor do they talk about the second rise of the "Northern Alliance" after the Taliban.

Only parts of the documents and reports exposing the crimes and insanity of "Jehadi bands" in Kabul are included. We have refrained from writing about the formation of the traitorous parties, their joining and parting, conspiracies, ammunitions and facilities and their dependency on foreign governments during the destruction of Kabul. Readers who are interested in those aspects of the bands and parties can refer to the original and complete compilation of these three important sources: *Afghan Justice Project, Human Rights Watch* and *Amnesty International.*

We hereby extend our thanks to the above three and all other sources whose documents are included in this book.

The documents taken from RAWA's publication in English (*The Burst of the "Islamic Government" Bubble in Afghanistan* No 1 and 2) and *Rozgaran* are only selected and compressed reports and not a complete representation of those sources.

The photographs are taken from RAWA's publication and website.

THE AFGHANISTAN JUSTICE PROJECT

Violations of Human Rights During the Period of the Islamic State of Afghanistan (ISA), 1992-1996

Victims of Indiscriminate Shelling, Rocketing and Bombardment by All Factions

A., a resident of Pul-e-Artan, described the killing of his son in a rocket attack. "At about 2:00 in the afternoon on December 30, 1992, twelve-year-old Baqi was playing with other children in the street near their residence. Without warning, a rocket landed in the street and exploded. Shrapnel hit Baqi in the neck and killed him on the spot. The neighbors identified the rocket fragments belonging to a BM21 rocket." A. was aware that the area of Pul-e-Artan was under bombardment from Hizb-e-Islami forces stationed in the Rishkor army base.

Z. stated that in 1994, her sister was living in Tahia Maskan area with her four children. One of her sons was 17 and one her daughters was 10; she also had two other children. A rocket fired from an area controlled by Hekmatyar struck her house, killing Z.'s sister, the 17-year-old and the 10-year-old, all of whom were in the house. The other two children were outside. Z. told the Afghanistan Justice Project, "The bodies could not be recognized. Their feet and hands were thrown everywhere. Then, we buried them. The two other children now live with their father. Also two other women and one boy were killed in the block near them. First, they were seriously injured and then died. At that day including my sister and her children six people were killed and buried.

N. described an attack on Karte Naw in August-September 1993, "We were living in Sarak-e-Naw of Karte Naw. All the areas of Karte Naw were destroyed by indiscriminate rockets of Gulbuddin. One of these rockets hit our house. Thank God no body was injured, but my daughter became disabled because of the terrible sound of the rocket. She could speak fluently, but you see that she cannot speak now and she cannot walk too. It is as if she is 5 or 6 years less than her real age. We used lots of medical treatment, but it didn't help. This is the result of these hostile fighting that hurt our life seriously."

Md. told AJP about an attack in 1993, "In 1993 when the Mujahideen parties came to Kabul, the indiscriminate rockets of Gulbuddin killed and

injured so many people and some became disabled. We were living in Afshar Darul Aman at that time. It was about 4 o'clock in the afternoon when a rocket hit our house near the door of the yard. My brother and eight or nine youth were standing in the lane and these eight or nine people except two of them got killed in a very bad way that you could not recognize them. My brother was injured seriously in his stomach and the fraction of the rocket is still in his body. People collected the bodies with shovels and made a shrine there. Those who were killed due to launching this rocket were Daoud, the university student in third class of engineering faculty, Fawad, a young 18-year old boy, and I don't know the others who were killed by this rocket."

The assault on west Kabul launched in February 1993 represents an example of indiscriminate bombardment by Shura-e-Nezar and Jamiat forces. The Afshar area was subjected to heavy bombardment during the first day of the operation. Although there were significant military targets in the area, including the Social Science Institute being used as headquarters by Hizb-e-Wahdat, a disproportionate number of rockets, tank shells and mortars fell in civilian residential areas.

The command centers of Jamiat / Shura-e-Nezar forces were within sight of Afshar, the intent of the attack appeared to be to drive out the civilian population from Afshar. The number killed by the bombardment is not known, but the Afghanistan Justice Project interviewed many survivors, all of whom described seeing bodies in the area. They also stated that the shelling and mortar fire was so intense, many residents hid on the first day, and did not try to leave.

From the Shura-e-Nezar side of the frontlines, a resident of Tap-e-Salaam, K., whose area was under the control of Gul Haider, described an episode of fighting between Shura-e-Nezar and Hizb-e-Wahdat. In February-March 1993, he said, "I was watching the fighting from my uncle's house. The armed men of Gul Haider Panjshiri were launching mortars from Tap-e-Salaam at the men of Ali Akbar Qasemi in the university area. It was almost afternoon when the father of our neighbor came to see my uncle because his leg had been wounded. My uncle was

an army officer and always had a first aid kit at home. While he was treating the leg, he sent me outside to fetch some water because he needed to wash the wound. The other members of the family were in the hall watching him treat our neighbor."

While K. was outside, his uncle's house was hit by a Wahdat shell. "The yard went dark and dusty," he said. "A lot of bricks and earth had fallen on me, but thank God, I wasn't hurt, just confused and shocked. But when the air cleared a bit, I cleaned my eyes and opened them, I saw that both floors of the house were destroyed. I could hear low cries and I tried to lift the bricks and the soil, but I couldn't."

K. went to fetch a cousin who helped him dig out the bodies under darkness and bury them in the yard: the fighting was too heavy for them to take the bodies elsewhere. Nine people had been killed:

1. His uncle, Captain Mohammad Azim
2. Uncle's wife (unnamed)
3. Zalmai, 16 years old
4. Zelgai, 14 years old
5. Delgai, 12 years old
6. Zemary, 10 years old
7. Shakila, 8 years old
8. Feriba, 6 years old
9. The father of their neighbor, Nazar Mohammed

From the ruins of his uncle's house, K. found a fragment of the shell. It had been launched, he said, from the university/Polytechnic area which was held by the Wahdat commander, Ali Akbar Qasemi. A separate witness, a former battalion commander, who was living in west Kabul, testified that Ali Akbar Qasemi did possess a BM1.

K. stated that cleric of the local mosque told him he had prayed over 38 bodies that day, all people from Tap-e-Salaam who had been killed in the Wahdat shelling and rocketing.

After that time, said K. most local people from Jamal Mina, Tap-e-Salaam and Karte Sakhi left for other parts of the city or Pakistan. Most left without goods, he said, and came back to find everything looted, including windows and roof timbers.

Two men from west Kabul both describe losing children in rocketing attacks launched by Ittihad forces.

Q., a carpenter, was living in Qala Shada on Saratan 27, 1371 (August 18, 1992) when an Ittihad rocket hit his home, "All the rooms were destroyed and one of my sons, Mohammad Ismael, who was 8 years old, was killed in a very nasty way – his body was left full of holes. Other members of my family who were in other rooms were injured so badly that it took a long, long time for them to heal."

Another victim of Ittihad rocketing, I., who was living in west Kabul in 1371 (1992) when, as he described it, the factions were fighting for power, "One day, a rocket hit my home and killed my son, Mohammad Hassan, who was 28 years old and my daughter, Zahra, who was 24. It was fired from Company or Diwan Bigi where the armed men of Ittihad-e-Islami were deployed."

Another civilian witness, M., testified that Shura-e-Nezar was able to cause considerable destruction in west Kabul because of its control of strategic heights. M. remembers Shura-e-Nezar launching, "heavy weapons and light weapons from the mountains above the people, against the residential areas." In 1372/1992, he said, there was serious fighting between Shura-e-Nezar and its ally, Ittihad-e-Islami on the one hand and Hizb-e-Wahdat that had gone on, "for days and for nights." His father had a hand cart and continued to go out to work despite the fighting, "One day," said M., "while the fighting was going on, Shura-e-Nezar launched a rocket at the De Buri area.. Shrapnel from the rocket hit my father and killed him. Then, people gathered and carried the body to Sar-e-Kariz Mosque and then buried him in Sang-e-Zughal cemetery in Qala Shada."

The Islamic State, through Defense Minister Ahmad Shah Massoud and leader of factional ally, Abdul Rasool Sayyaf, committed the following military forces to participate in the Afshar operation.

Jamiat-e-Islami commanders and units

Mohammad Qasim Fahim, director of intelligence, with responsibility for special operations in support of the offensive and participating in planning of the operation.

Anwar Dangar, commander of a division level unit of Mujahideen from Shakkar Darra, Shamali, named by numerous witnesses as leading troops in Afshar that carried out abuses on the first two days of the operation.

Mullah Izzat, commander of a division level unit of Mujahideen, from Paghman, named by numerous eye witnesses as leading troops in Afshar that carried out abuses on the first two days of the operation.

Mohammad Ishaq Panjshiri, commander of a brigade level unit of Mujahideen (lewa) that, according to witnesses, participated in the assault.

Haji Bahlol Panjshiri, commander of a brigade level unit (lewa) that, according to witnesses participated in the assault.

Baba Jullunder Panjshiri, commander of a brigade level unit (lewa) that participated in the assault.

Khanjar Akhund, Panjshiri, commander of a battalion level unit (ghund) that participated in the assault.

Mushdoq Lalai, battalion level, participated in the assault.

Baz Mohammad Ahmadi Badakhshani, commander of a division level unit that participated in the assault, attacking from Qargha.

Ittihad-e-Islami commanders and units participating in the operation

Haji Shir Alam, division commander affiliated to Sayyaf, from Paghman, named by numerous eye witnesses as leading troops in Afshar on the first two days when abuses were committed.

Zulmai Toofan, commander of the Lewa 597 brigade, named by numerous eye witnesses as leading troops in Afshar on the first two days, when abuses were committed. (Lewa 597 existed before the fall of Dr. Najibullah's government when it was called Lewa Moradat-Tank). It was in based in the Company area of west Kabul.

Dr. Abdullah, commander of a battalion level unit (ghund) of the Lewa 597, named by several witnesses as leading troops in Afshar on day one and two, when abuses were committed.

Jaglan Naeem, commander of a battalion level unit (ghund) of the Lewa 597, had stationed troops in Afshar by second day of the operation.

Mullah Taj Mohammad named as participating in planning of the operation.

Abdullah Shah, named by several witnesses as leading troops in Afshar and responsible for arbitrary arrests, abductions and other abuses.

Khinjar, who had stationed troops in Afshar by the second day of the operation.

Abdul Manan Diwana, commander of a battalion level unit (ghund), named by witnesses as stationing troops in Afshar by the second day of the operation.

Amanullah Kochi, commander of a battalion level unit (ghund), had stationed troops in Afshar by second day of the operation.

Shirin, commander of a battalion level unit (ghund), had stationed troops in Afshar by the second day of the operation.

Mushtaq Lalai, commander of a battalion level unit (ghund), had stationed troops in Afshar by the second day of the operation.

Mullah Kachkol, had stationed troops in Afshar by second day of the operation.

On the second day of the operation, February 12, Massoud convened a meeting in the Hotel Intercontinental which, belatedly, discussed arrangements for security in the newly captured areas. This meeting was attended by top ISA military commanders and political figures, including Rabbani, Sayyaf, Hayatollah Mohsin, Ayatollah Fazl, and General Fahim.

Summary Executions and Disappearances

Witness A. told the Afghanistan Justice Project that he and his family had tried to escape, but the rocketing and shelling was too intense. "We ran to my mother-in-law's house and hid there. Other people told us that people were being killed on the roads. Eventually a few other families joined us. We could hear the radios of some of the Sayyaf people and they were being warned not to start fighting over the loot. The armed men – who were from Sayyaf and from Jamiat – were looting all the houses. Sayyaf's people spoke Pashto; Jamiat spoke Dari. I sent my family to another place and I stayed at the house. At about 11:00 a.m. a commander named Izzatullah (from Ittihad) came to the house with about ten other armed men. I had left the door open hoping the militias would think the house empty. They came in and beat me and took me to Qargha river where I was put into a container with about 60-65 men. It was very crowded. Sometimes some men were taken out and made to do work, like chop wood."

After a week the prisoners were all told how much they would have to pay to be released. The witness was told he would have to pay $5000. He told them he did not have that much money, but friends in Paghman came and paid for his release.

Witness B. told the Afghanistan Justice Project that Ittihad-e-Islami troops had beaten her and arrested her unarmed husband from their residence in Afshar, and that he was still accounted for.

Witness C. told the Afghanistan Justice Project that the soldiers searched the houses looking for men. "I was taken to Paghman. At night I was kept in a container; during the day I and other 10-20 men were made to dig trenches. There were lots of containers. At night some men would be taken out and not come back. We could hear shots and we assumed the men had been killed. I think some were buried in the trenches. I finally escaped by hiding in the river under a bridge. I left and went to Quetta."

Witness M. told the Afghanistan Justice Project that at 7:.00 in the morning, when Ittihad-e-Islami captured Afshar, a group of armed men entered her residential compound, and detained S., her husband. They released him after 45 days. He had been beaten so severely his hearing had been permanently damaged and he was deaf. According to his wife, he also had difficulty recognizing people. After he was detained, a second group of 10-15 Ittihad soldiers came to the house between 3:00 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. They claimed that they were looking for Wahdat forces, they grabbed M.'s son by the arm.

"My son was about 11 years old. They held him and asked where his father was. They aimed their guns at him and I threw myself over him. I was shot in the hand and leg but he was shot five times. He died." The soldiers then took the family belongings and left.

Witness K., 75 years old, stated that troops affiliated to Sayyaf abducted him from Sare Joi, Afshar on the day of the Afshar operation, February 11. He was one of a group of seven men who were taken prisoner, and beaten severely and made to act as porters to help carry goods being looted from Afshar. The Ittihad troops then took him to Company (a Sayyaf-controlled area) on that day and held him there for two months. The commander who captured him was Ghulam Rasool, affiliated to Sayyaf. He stated that after that he spent two months in Shakar Darra as a prisoner of Anwar Dangar, and then three months

in Farzah with Commandant Haneef. He witnessed the troops summarily executing one of his relatives, Qambar Zohar.

Witness G. was briefly arrested and beaten unconscious by Ittihad troops on the first day of the operation. When he returned to the area later he removed two bodies from his well, and estimates that he saw 30-35 bodies himself while fleeing the area (including a decapitated head left in a window).

Abdullah Khan, of Ghazni Province, 67 years old, was arrested from Afshar by Commander Aziz Banjar, a Sayyaf commander. The rest of the family had fled to Taimani during the main military operation. Abdullah Khan had stayed on in Afshar to guard the household goods. However, all household goods were stolen during the operation and the house was destroyed. The family has have been unable to trace Abdullah Khan and so he remains missing.

Witness Sh. told the Afghanistan Justice Project that when Ittihad forces entered her house, they beat to death her father inside the compound. They then stole all household belongings.

Rape by Ittihad Forces

During the Afshar operation, Sayyaf's Ittihad-e-Islami forces used rape and other assaults on civilians to drive the civilian population from the area. The Afghanistan Justice Project interviewed many witnesses who described incidents of rape by Ittihad forces during the Afshar operation. Witness M. (see statement above) was injured in the hand and leg when Ittihad soldiers shot her son. She stated, "While I was still bleeding they raped me." She stated that three soldiers held her down while the fourth raped her in the basement of her own house. Several other women had also taken shelter in M.'s house: a neighbor, Z., and her two daughters, and another woman, R. The Ittihad troops raped Z.'s two daughters, ages 14 and 16, and the woman, R. The soldiers took them by turn down to the basement to carry out the rape. One of Z.'s daughters was injured by a bayonet when she attempted to resist.

Another witness, S., stated that armed men had burst into her house at Afshar-Silo on the second day of the Afshar operation. They beat and raped her and her sister in their house and looted the contents.

Witness Sh. stated that after capturing Afshar, Ittihad-e-Islami troops forcibly entered her house at 7:00 a.m. They raped four girls in their residential compound, including Sh. her sister, age 14 years, and two others.

There were many other reports of rape; the numbers of women raped is not known. Residents of Afshar did not return until after 2001. As of mid-2005, the area remains largely flattened, although some former residents have returned to the ruins of their former homes.

Torture and summary executions and other abuses by Hizb-e-Wahdat forces, principally in Kabul and Mazar-i-Sharif 1992-1998

The Afghanistan Justice Project has reviewed testimony charging commanders affiliated to Hizb-e-Wahdat with a range of violations of the laws of war that fall into the following patterns:

1. War crimes committed pursuant to the factional conflict, principally the summary execution of prisoners and political opponents, torture, indiscriminate attacks and deliberate targeting of civilians and non-combatants.

2. Gross abuses against civilians, which were incidental to the conflict itself. These were directed largely against civilians deemed to be non-Hazara and aligned to rival factions, although some of the abuses were also directed against the ethnic Hazara civilians of Hizb-e-Wahdat controlled areas. This pattern of abuse has been documented in both Kabul 1992-95 and Mazar 1992-98. The abuses include abduction, arbitrary detention, inflicting cruel and degrading punishments, rape, summary executions, wanton destruction and looting.

3. Chronic abuse of power, particularly in Hazara majority rural areas, where local commanders and administrators used their de facto impunity to indulge in abuses such as rape and forced marriage.

4. Failure of leadership to take effective action against commanders who abused the authority and military power that they wielded by virtue of their position in Hizb-e-Wahdat.

A key aspect of the pattern of abuse by Hizb-e-Wahdat commanders, as documented by the Afghanistan Justice Project, is that from an early stage in the factional conflict it assumed a sectarian character. Prisoners from opposing factions were executed and civilians were under suspicion because they belonged to the same ethnicity or sect as the opposing faction. Civilians of other ethnicities were targeted in an attempt to gain leverage over, or revenge against, opposing factions. A cycle of revenge operated in Kabul 1992-95. Sectarian violence started later in Mazar-i-Sharif, but lasted longer, through the period of the major massacres 1997-1998, and after.

Hazara civilians were among the victims of this cycle of violence. But abusive Hizb-e-Wahdat commanders clearly contributed to launching and sustaining the violence and abuse.

Parwana from Shaidan district of Bamyan, Wahdat's senior prosecutor. Worked in Kota Ganai and the Zone 3 Police Station. Accused of routinely torturing detainees. Now believed to be living in Quetta, Pakistan.

Kargar, a former member of PDPA, originally from Jaghori, Ghazni. Accused of systematic torture. Believed to be now living in Quetta, Pakistan.

Aziz, from Bamyan, worked in Kota Gonai. Worked for the KHAD in the 11th Department during the Najibullah era. Believed to be now living in Kabul.

Khadim, from Sheikh Ali. Member of Parcham wing of the PDPA, worked as a prosecutor of the armed force in the Najibullah era. Now believed to be living in Quetta.

Mujtaba, from Torkham Valley of Parwan Province. Worked in the Social Science Academy before being assassinated. Had worked in the High Prosecution Department during the Najibullah era.

One lower-ranking Ittihad-e-Islami commander, Nazeer, who was captured by the Wahdat commander, Shafi Diwana, when Wahdat forces overran his post in Diwan Bigi, described being detained in a container set in the ground in Kota Gonai. "We had to piss inside the container and they would throw food in to us," he said.

"During the night, they'd take a couple of people out and pretend to release them, but we still don't know what happened to them." Until he became too weak, Nazeer said, he was interrogated daily, "They hung me upside down by my feet and burned petrol below me. And from above, they threw water. They beat me with pieces of wood and fired pistols next to my head." He says he was blindfolded and made to sit cross-legged on the ground with nails driven into the ground to prevent him moving. Then a dog was let loose on him. "It was touching me and tearing my clothes and scratching me."

Nazeer was eventually freed after his commander exchanged Wahdat prisoners with Shafi Diwana. Nazeer's commander said he bought prisoners from other Ittihad-e-Islami commanders to exchange for his subordinate. But one of the Wahdat prisoners had lost a hand in the fighting – and for this, Nazeer would be punished. "When they saw his hand was lost," said Nazeer, "they cut off my hand too, there, in that room. There was an axe and they cut off my right hand and put it into the other hand to carry. I don't know who cut it off because he had his face hidden and had on white gloves like a doctor. He got out of a land cruiser and they blindfolded me and for a while I didn't understand what he was going on. Then when they cut my hand off, I understood everything." Nazeer's commander said he was later offered Hazara prisoners by one of the senior Ittihad-e-Islami commanders, Mumtaz, to kill in revenge for the loss of the hand.

Two men accused by Wahdat of belonging to the rival Shia faction, Harakat-e-Islami, have also described their detention in Kota Gonai and elsewhere. Sami says he was arrested on 23rd Sombola 1373 (September 1994)

and taken first to Commander Qasim,181 and then to the head of Internal Security, Bahrami, who took him to one of the faction's main detention facilities, Zone 3 Police Station. "At 1.30 in the night, they started to interrogate me. But they didn't hear what they wanted, so they said they would kill me – to prove to others that struggling against Mazari's forces was no easy thing." After nine days of detention, he said he was taken out for what he believed was his execution. "In order to get rid of their guest," he said, "They took me to the frontline of the fighting. But they handed me over to someone who smoked a lot of hashish and was also drunk. It was during the night and using the darkness, I escaped."

Another man, Wali, was working with government intelligence when he was arrested by Hizb-e-Wahdat in 1994. They accused him of working for Harakat-e-Islami. He remembers being arrested and taken to the base of Dr Sadiq Mudabir183 and then to the Detective Branch (*kashf)* in Karte Seh. He said he was kept there for seven days locked in a toilet that was deliberately flooded with water. He was then transferred to Kota Ganai, where, he said, Parwana was, "in charge of interrogation and torture." Wali himself said he was only subjected to mental torture, including threats to hang him and insults towards his wife and family. Wali estimated there were 250-300 prisoners detained in Kota Gonai at the time. They included prisoners of war, Shias accused of crimes against Hizb-e-Wahdat and a number of high profile political prisoners. He said they were segregated, Sunnis and Shias. Wali's family managed to intervene with Mazari and get their son released by guaranteeing that he would not leave west Kabul or go back to his government job or to areas controlled by Shura-e-Nezar.

Although Wahdat had central detention facilities, most commanders also had their own private prisons. Most civilian hostages rounded up during and after the June 1992 clashes were retained in these detention centers, rather than being handed over to the main facilities. Shafi Diwana kept prisoners in Deh Mazang and Kote Sangi, the Commander of Division 097, Abuzar, who is from Mazar-i-Sharif, used the Afshar Orphanage Association and the Alawadin Orphanage Association. Haji Amini, head of Division 096 had a personal prison in his home area of Parwan Province. Zabit Akbar Qasimi, head of 095 Division

had detention facilities in the Technical College (Takhnik Sanawi) and De Bori. One former Wahdat battalion commander, Safdar, said the prison of 095 was some distance from the two main buildings of the Technical College dormitory. "There were many, many prisoners in there," he said, "some who had been arrested in the fighting; others who were civilians had been taken from their houses. Some were seriously sick because of not having enough food. I personally saw three men tortured in that prison who died as a result of the torture. One was from Fazil Baig, another was from Paghman and the third was from Maidan Shah. They threw the body of the Maidan Shah man beside the wall of the Higher Education Ministry. But the following day, the weather was warm and the body smelt really bad, so we buried him next to the wall."

A civilian whose son was arrested, detained and murdered by Wahdat forces is Gul, who is Tajik. She described how her son, Mohammed Haroon, then in his last year of school, disappeared on 15 Dalwa 1371 (February 2, 1993). His cousin told the Afghanistan Justice Project that they were both arrested by Wahdat forces as they walked past Spin Kalai High School.

The cousin managed to escape. Fifteen days later, said Gul, after spending a lot of money, they managed to locate her son's body. It was in a dry well at the Watan Orphan Association in Afshar with, she says, many signs of torture on it. "They burned him and took his eyes out." said his cousin. "It is impossible to say the reason why the commanders of Wahdat committed such crimes," said his cousin, "Maybe it was because of religious and tribal prejudice."

As different factions came into conflict with Hizb-e-Wahdat, civilians seen as aligned with other groups came under suspicion or were seen as justifiable targets of attack. When tensions with Shura-e-Nezar and the ISA worsened, leading to Wahdat's leaving the ISA government at the end of 1992, Tajiks - who were associated with Shura-e-Nezar – became suspect.

Fatima, who is from Shamali, says her husband was accused of spying and possessing weapons after Wahdat took over their area near the Russian Embassy in fighting with Shura-e-Nezar. She described Commander Shafi Diwana, the head of the Second Brigade and another commander whom she

said had, "a reddish face" coming to their home and beating her husband. (Commander Shafi was one of several Wahdat commanders whose excessive abuses earned them the epithet *Diwana* – meaning mad.

He had been a student at the university when the Mujahideen captured Kabul, but became one of Wahdat's most notorious commanders and is frequently cited in witness testimony.)After searching the house thoroughly and spoiling rice, flour and other food stuffs, she said they found no weapons, but still wanted to arrest her husband. They left only when she cried and gave the men all their money and belongings. A few days later, she said, three or four men from Wahdat came asking for tea from their neighbors, who were also from Shamali, and raped the young daughter of the house, Jamila. Soon after that, Fatima said, she and her family left the area.

One woman, Sh., said her husband was arrested by Commanders Shafi Diwana and Nabi Gao at De Mazang Post and accused of being a Sunni Muslim and a Pashtun. They beat him, she said, breaking a hand and dislocating an elbow, both so badly, he was left disabled.

Another woman, Bibi, remembered there being fighting between Shura-e-Nezar and Hizb-e-Wahdat in Alawadin and Karte Seh in Hut 1372 (February 1994). Wahdat men were taking civilians from their houses, including men to dig trenches. Her husband, she said, was arrested in their street as he was leaving for work and taken to dig trenches at Shafi Diwana's post at De Mazang. "My husband told them that they mustn't take him, he had a family to feed and they must let him work. But they took no notice and beat him up and took him away." Later, she said, she was informed that her husband was terribly injured and had been taken to the Red Cross hospital.

Other civilians living under areas controlled by Wahdat forces appear to have been targeted merely because commanders had the power to abuse them. For example, Kamal, a laborer living in Qala Ali Mardan, describes his fifteen year old son getting into an argument in 1994 with the local commander of the nearby post whose name was Commander Hadi. The following day, Kamal said,

Hadi ambushed his son, took him to one of the streets and shot him dead, "No-one had any power at that time. I went everywhere to complain," said the father. But it resulted in nothing."

Another witness, Farida, who is originally from Shamali, said she had gone to her father's home in Qala-e-Qazi as a guest. A wedding party from Shamali came to fetch a bride from the area and was stopped at the Wahdat post in the Sare Pul part of Dashti-e-Barchi. They took the bride forcibly out of her car and into the military post, said Farida, but the Paghman commanders, Izzat and Zalmai were informed and came and there was serious fighting. Some members of the wedding party were injured, she said, but the bride, even though her clothes were torn, was rescued.

Listening to testimony from those living in Wahdat-controlled areas, there is a strong sense of daily and often arbitrary abuse, what one witness, R., described as, 'oppression.' She said locals had to prepare food for the military post located in what had once been one of the foremost girls' schools in Kabul, Rabia Balkhi. It was Jaddi 1371 (December 1992 –January 1993) and according to another witness who knows Wahdat well the post was then held by Commander Sayid Ali Jan from Wahdat. There was heavy fighting between Jamiat and Wahdat. Because of the "oppression" from the troops, R., said, people were leaving the neighborhood, so their turn to prepare food came more and more frequently. One night, she said, soldiers came round asking for food for fifteen people. "My husband told them there was no work and we have no money to buy anything. 'Search the whole house,' he said, 'and if you find a pound of rice or flour, then shoot me!'" The soldiers got angry, Riffat said, and told him to give them his bike or they would kill him. They went to get food from other places. The following day, she said, her husband and a neighbor were arrested in the mosque and taken to Soria High School. Soldiers stole everything from their pockets and beat them so badly that her husband became ill.

Another time, R. said, Wahdat forces came to the house, beat them and demanded money; when they said they had none, the soldiers beat her two sons and left with some of the family's belongings. The following day her brother-in-

law (husband's brother) was targeted, she said. The troops demanded that he leave his two-storey home which they wanted to turn into a military post. "They told him he had no right to take any of his belongings with him." He died of a heart attack, she said, because of the oppression of Wahdat troops.

R. said that, as the troops became crueler by the day, killing people and looting their belongings, the family decided to leave. They rented a handcart to take what was left of their belongings, but even then, had to give some of them to the soldiers. Later, when they finally returned to the house, she said, they found the doors, window and power cables had all been stolen.

Another witness, Z. has described living in the Char-Rahi Najari area in 1372 (1993). One afternoon, she said, gunmen belonging to Commander Shafi Diwana entered her home and immediately started to beat her husband.

"They wanted to know which faction he was affiliated to. He said he wasn't affiliated to any party, he was a laborer, with a machine shop. Finally, they beat him and took him with them. We were poor people. We didn't have money or property or expensive belongings. But they also took the belonging we had. For four or five days they had my husband and we had no information about him. Finally, God was kind to me and one of our neighbors told Commander Shafi Diwana that my husband was illiterate and not related to any faction. He came back home. He'd been beaten a lot. We were so afraid, we just left the area. We didn't even take our remaining belongings."

Research carried out by the Afghanistan Justice Project does not indicate that the Wahdat senior command and leadership ordered the abuses against civilians. Some testimony refers to the leadership, Mazari in particular, receiving complaints about the behavior of their commanders.

For example, witness Sami reports "In my presence, Ustad Mazari warned and threatened them (sub-commanders Abu Sharif Mazari and Morteza) not to commit these crimes which had dishonored them."

However, the persistence of the pattern of systematic abuse of civilians,

and Wahdat leaders' failure to enforce effective action against its commanders to stop and prevent abuses amounts to a policy of tolerating the behavior. Indeed, even though they were unable to enforce discipline among their subordinates, Wahdat leaders continued to recognize them as legitimate commanders within the faction and even acknowledged that the commanders had engaged in these abductions and other abuses in retaliation for similar actions by other factions.197

Thus, in some cases the Wahdat leadership condoned the abuses as part of the inter-factional rivalry, in others their unwillingness to control their commanders represents a serious failing of command and leadership. In either instance, they share culpability for the abuses that occurred.

Examples of abuses against civilians in the north

In Northern Afghanistan, commanders who were affiliated to Hizb-e-Wahdat commanders used their control over territory and ability to operate without any effective constraint and terrorized the civilian population. These actions took place largely apart from any relation to factional conflict. The Afghanistan Justice Project has received detailed testimony about the mass murder of Pashtun civilians on three separate occasions by Hizb-e-Wahdat forces. They followed the initial defeat of the Taliban in Mazar-i-Sharif in 1997 and, as far as the complainants can ascertain, were carried out simply for revenge. All of those killed were Pashtun, the same ethnic group as the Taliban.

Members of several families from the Tasadi area of Balkh described the killing of nine men and boys in 1376/1996 by a Hizb-e-Wahdat battalion commander called Ali Sarwar Gunx. (Gunx, meaning mad or drunk is another of the epithets adopted by Wahdat commanders who had a reputation for brutality). One civilian, Mohammad, said that Commander Sarwar, who had men deployed in the Tasadi, Ali Chopan and Karte Ariana areas of Balkh province, arrested all the Pashtuns working on a farm belonging to a local businessman called Rasul Barat. His father, Amir Gul and his thirteen year old brother, Gul Mir, and six other men and boys were arrested. Their hands were tied and they

were taken to a nearby Shia mosque *(takhi khana)* in Ali Chopan village. Then, says Mohammad, they were beaten to death - with guns, pieces of wood, stones, knives and bayonets – in front of local people. The bodies were then cut into pieces, he said, and thrown into a well near the mosque.

The wife of another victim, told AJP how her thirteen year old son, Aqa Mohammed, said he would go to see one of his father's friends who was Hazara to try to get him to plead on his behalf, "I told him to go in a hurry to tell him," she said, "so that my husband could be released. But when he went to the Ali Chopan area, the gunmen of Ali Sarwar arrested him too. They tied his hands together and took him before Ali Sarwar. He killed my thirteen year old son as well. Then he was thrown into the same well."

Mohammad and two of the widows have described to the Afghanistan Justice Project how Ali Sarwar and his men then looted the dead men's homes. Two days later, said Mohammad, he went with several elders to see the owner of the farm, Rasool Barat. He said he could do nothing about the perpetrators, but we would try to get the bodies back for burial. "After eleven days," said Mohammad, "Ustad Mohaqiq gave his permission and sent two delegates from Hizb-e-Wahdat. Two people came from Junbish, two from Hizb-e-Islami and two from Jamiat-e-Islami. We took the bodies out of the well in Ali Chopan. All had been cut into pieces."

The murdered men and boys, said Mohammad, were among the poorest in the area and named the victims as follows:

1. Abdul Ghafor son of Wali Mohammed, 40
2. Abdul Karim son of Mohammed Nur, 23
3. Ainuddin son of Mohammed Nur, 25
4. Ameer Gul son of Sher Jan, 45
5. Gul Mir son of Ameer Gul, 13
6. Shah Wali son of Sultan Mohammed, 18
7. Sharafuddin, 40
8. Zaman son of Sharafuddin, 17
9. Aqa Mohammed son of Abdul Ghafor, 13

"The crime of Ali Sarwar is clear," said Mohammad, "It was carried out, not during the darkness of the night, but in broad daylight. And what was the crime of those nine people? They were neither Taliban nor anything else. Their only fault was that they were Pashtun."

Another mass killing of Pashtun civilians took place at Bizi-e-Sukhta of Qizilabad village on April 9, 1998. One of the survivors said that he and his fellow villagers were on a bus which was stopped at Hizb-e-Wahdat forces. "We were about eight people to go to the city for laboring during the days. Regularly I was going to the city along with my brother for laboring. One evening when we were coming back home, the forces of commander Baba, a Mazar-based Wahdat commander, nominally under Ustad Mohaqiq, stopped the bus and asked all of us where we were from. When we told them we are from Gurymar village they took us off the bus to their post and accused us of being Taliban. We were all Pashtuns. They took all our money and put us all in a container. In the middle of the night they opened the door of container and tied our hands together and took us out to a nearby well. They first threw my brother into the well and shot him inside the well. I started running away with my hands still bound and they shot at me. I was injured in my hand and one of them was running after me, but I reached Qalayee Mohammad village which was the nearest area. They did not catch me. But they threw the others into the well.

Their names were:

1. Sayid Ahmad son of Haji Barat.
2. Moh'd Hassan son of Atagul the brother of Ramazan.
3. Amaullah son of Sayyid Moh'd.
4. Asadullah son of Mohammad Hassan.
5. Nurullah son of Besmellah
6. Jumadin son of Qutbuddin.

Later the bodies were removed from the well and buried in a collective graveyard.

Forces under the Ustad Yaseen, a senior northern Hizb-e-Wahdat

Commander responsible to Mohaqiq, are accused of another mass killing and kidnap of Pashtun civilians. This incident took place four months after the Gurymar killings, in Kampeerak village in Nahr Shahi district of Balkh province, about 20 kilometres from the main city of Mazar-i-Sharif. One of the survivors, Khan, said that, on 6/8/1998, his village was attacked by hundreds of Wahdat fighters at 3.30am. "Most of the people in Kampeerak are Pashtun," said Khan, "the others are Turkman and Arab. In total, there are three hundred homes, all of us farmers. Ustad Yaseen is from the neighboring village of Shaikh Mirghlan, about two kilometres away. His men – from Mirghlan and Sare Asyab - came with others from Bamyan. They attacked our village because they thought there were Taliban hidden there."

Khan says the soldiers came into the houses and started killing men and animals. He said he was hit five times in different parts of his body and then just lay on the floor pretending to be dead, "I kept my eyes closed so they wouldn't shoot me anymore and I heard them saying that I'd been killed. They arrested my brother and took him out. The women and children were crying. Meanwhile they were taking all my belongings out of my home. I was lying on the floor from 3:30 am to 4:00 am and I was bleeding a huge amount. Only at 4.00, did some people from the neighboring villages come and take me and the ten other injured people to the hospital in Shibirghan." Khan said many of the injured were left permanently disabled. He, for example, has lost the use of one hand.

By that time, he said, Hizb-e-Wahdat had left their village and gone on the asphalt road to

Langar Khana village and the Taliban had entered Mazar-i-Sharif. They had taken home appliances and livestock, but it proved difficult to keep the plundered goods and escape from the Taliban. Khan said Ustad Yaseen's men took some of the plunder to their home villages of Mirghalan and Sar-e-Asyab villages. Other goods were found on the roads and in other villages in the cars in which they had been driven.

"Mohaqiq's men killed our people only because they were Pashtun," he said," Everyone in Balkh knows that we are poor farmers, that we were unarmed and had no Taliban among us."

He said 17 people were killed and identified 15 of them as follows:
1. Mullah Abdur Razaq, 62 years old, the Mullah of the village mosque.
2. Nur Gul, son of Allah Noor, 45 years old.
3. Mohammad Gul, son of Allah Nur, 40 years old.
4. Mohammad Akram, son of Juma Khan, 30 years old.
5 & 6. Two people who were the guests of Mohammad Akram.
7. Gholam Ali, son of Shaikh Mohammad, 75 years old who was the elder of the village.
8. Taj Mohammad Qaryadar, son of Din Mohammad, 70 years old.
9. Dad Mohammad, son of Nur Mohammad, 50 years old.
10. Abdul Ghani son of Abdul Rasul, 50 years old.
11. Nur Mohammad, son of Mohammad Haidar, 65 years old.
12. The shepherd of Nur Mohammad who was an old man, 80 years old
13. Sayid Alam, 55 years old.
14. Mahmood Khan son of Mir Alam, 40 years old.
15. Mohammad Sarwar, son of Juma Khan, 70 years old.

Khan said that more than seventy people were arrested from the village, among them his brother.

Also arrested was Mansoor, who said they took seventy-two prisoners in all. "I was told to get out of my house and beaten with a rifle butt. Then they tied my hands together and took me to the mosque where their cars were parked. I saw all the villagers there with their hands bound and their faces bloody. They ordered us to get in a truck, a Kamaz, a Russian truck. That was very difficult because our hands were tied. I almost fell down. One of the prisoners asked them to release the hands of one or two of us in order to help the others into the lorry. They beat him on his head with their rifle butts and he went unconscious. He's still alive, but has mental problems. They threw that man in like a sack into the lorry and took us all to Silo in Mazar-i-Sharif."

Mansoor said they were taken to an oil storage container which was five meters deep; the way in covered over likes a well. They were ordered to get in, he said, but one of the soldiers, who seemed to be better than the others, suggested getting a ladder, so they waited a minute and then climbed down into the container.

"It was 5 meters high and 5 meters wide and there were already others inside who they'd brought in before us. We were there for many hours and it was during the hot days of the summer. It was so hot and we were extremely thirsty. We shouted to bring us water, but there was no response. Meanwhile, we could hear shooting from the area for about an hour and then there was silence. We were all in a very bad way, but there was nothing we could do. So we shouted again, 'Oh sirs! Bring us a little water or we'll die.' Then someone came and asked who had thrown us in there. We answered that Hizb-e-Wahdat had put us there. Then, he asked again, what were our jobs? We said we were poor laborers and the armed men of Wahdat had put us there. Then, they told us to get out, but we said the container was deep and we couldn't get out without a ladder."

A ladder was brought and they climbed out and Khan and his companions realized the Taliban had taken the area. They were free to go home. "We came back to the village, sometimes walking and sometimes getting lifts. When we arrived, we saw that nothing remained. There were people killed or injured and all the families were shocked and confused."

Chronic abuse of power in Hazarajat, example of abuses attributed to the Akbari faction of Hizb-e-Wahdat

During the resistance against the PDPA and Soviet occupation, Akbari, of Waras District, Bamyan province, was the leader of the Sipa Pasdoran faction. This faction was merged with the other Shia groups in 1989, to form Hizb-e-Wahdat. Akbari remained an influential leader and member of the Central Committee, in the new merged party. During the civil war and factional conflict in Kabul, 1992-96, he emerged as a challenger to Mazari for the leadership of Hizb-e-Wahdat. As Mazari's conflict with the Rabbani-led administration intensified from early 1993 onwards, Akbari's Sipa Pasdoran re-emerged as the pro-ISA faction of Wahdat. Supported by Massoud, Akbari's faction was involved in several rounds of conflict with the Mazari and Khalili faction of Wahdat, both

in Kabul and Hazarajat. This factional rivalry was the basis for many intra-Shia abuses. During the period 1998-2001, Akbari maintained an alliance with the Taliban that allowed him to stay on in Hazarajat as the most senior Shia leader in country and to nominate his affiliated commanders to administrative positions, although he himself avoided taking any official position. During the Karzai administrations, Akbari has retained his status as one of the leading Shia political leaders and in May, 2005 was nominated as a parliamentary candidate in Bamyan province.

As an example of how the chronic abuses have outlived the main civil conflict, Faqta, from Waras, has described being kidnapped by armed men who were close relations or commanders of Akbari. The incident took place on November 2000). Faqta stated that she had been raped by a cousin of Akbari, Hamayoon. She was 15 years old at the time. Faqta said, "It was 1 o'clock at night, when 13 gunmen and commanders related to Ustad Akbari came to our home. We were all sleeping in one room. They came over the wall of the compound and smashed the compound door down. It was old. Then they came outside the window of the room where we were sleeping and told us. "Open the door, you pimps." When we didn't open it, they got a long iron rod and pushed it under the door to try to open it – but it still didn't open. So they broke the window."

Faqta said five of the men came inside as she and her sister ran to the bathroom and locked the door. But the gunmen got in.

"They treated me in a very bad way. I screamed so much, but no-one could help me. They were beating my father. My mother took the Holy Qu'ran and came and told them, 'For the sake of this Holy Qur'an, do not do these cruel things against us. What's our crime, that you do this against us?' All the neighbors heard our screaming and yelling, but they couldn't get out of their homes because there was a gunman posted in front of each house. So they beat me and took me away. My father and mother and the rest of the family and the neighbors were forced to stay inside until the morning so they couldn't find out where I'd been taken."

Faqta named her kidnappers as relatives and close associates of Akbari, "Hamayoon (who, until completion of DDR was a commander in the army division associated with Akbari), Din Mohammed, Zaffar and Hussein Baksh - grandchildren of Akbari's paternal uncle, Mahdi and Ibrahim Ayar, relatives of Akbari and Zahir Mahmoudi, the paternal cousin of Akbari, also a commander of Akbari."

Fatqa said, "They came that night and took me bare-headed and bare-foot to a village called Burghasunak, all the way threatening to kill me if I screamed. They took me to a room where there were many people - all Akbari's men. I was in that place for nine days. I was raped in a very bad manner during the night and I screamed so much that I lost consciousness several times and then revived. When I remember it even now, it has a very bad effect on my nerves, but what can I do? Then they took me to another village called Petab Joy and it was Akbari's own base. His paternal cousin took me into his home which was near Akbari's own home."

When asked why she was kidnapped, Faqta said that Hamayoon had been engaged to one of her relatives, but had not been happy with her. "He had personal problems with her," she said, "and so he abducted me." However, Faqta also said that her father was a land owner *(malik)*, whereas Akbari's Sipah Pasdaran faction had always been strongly anti-*malik.*

Junbish Abuses against Civilians in Kabul

Several women from one extended family describe Junbish troops coming to one of their houses in the Shah Shahid district in 1993. M. said Junbish men came at 9 o'clock in the morning. "We delayed opening the door for a while and when my husband did open it, they beat him up, saying, 'Why did you lock the door? Did you deploy our enemies in your home so that they could ambush us?'" When the soldiers went up onto the roof, M. said, they found her husband's maternal uncle on the roof and shot him without any question. "They were beating the other men of the family with the stocks of their rifles," she said, "and asking, 'Why haven't you left the area yet? We've been ordered that your heads belongs to our leaders and

your honor and property belong to us. So you have no right to ask us about anything that we want to do.'"

One of the sisters of the dead man, W., tried to get permission to bury the body from the nearest military post but, her family said, she was shot in the legs and left permanently disabled. Most of the women and girls of the family had already gone to other areas for their protection, said M., but her husband's maternal aunt, S., who was still living there, was taken forcibly to the Naqlia Base. Even though she was an old woman, said M., she was sexually assaulted.

Later, another sister of the murdered man, A. said they obtained a letter from the commander at the Naqlia Base giving them permission to return home to fetch their belongings. She and her husband went with two of her nieces. After they reached their homes, she said, a group of armed Junbish men also arrived, "Those cruel men did such bad actions to me I can't describe them," says A. "They gave permission for us to take our things away, so that they could come and rape us. My nieces were beautiful and had perfect bodies. Their commander told them our heads were for the commanders and our properties and bodies were for his men." One of the nieces, B., said she told the soldiers that she was just getting her children's clothes, "They told me to leave the area fast – but first I should given them some fun and keep them happy," she said. "So they raped me. As I was young and healthy, I knew what was happening to me." The *Gilam Jams* did not think about whether a woman was young or old, said B. "When they found a woman, they raped her."

The Afghanistan Justice Project has heard testimony from many women saying their husbands were beaten, their homes were looted and they themselves suffered rape or attempted rape by Junbish men. W., who is also from the Shah Shahid district, was recently married when Junbish troops entered her house one evening in 1993. They beat her husband and tied him in a corner of the room. They also beat her brother-in-law who lived in the same house, "They didn't rape his wife because she had lots of children, big and small, who cried and shouted. But oh, how unlucky I was! They robbed me of all my jewelry and property and they raped me."

Another victim, Sh. said she was three or four months pregnant when she was attacked one night in 1372 (1993). "It was 10.30 at night when they broke down the door of our house," said Sh., "two dozen men, with their faces masked." She said they beat her husband and two of the men grabbed her and dragged her to another room. She was screaming and crying, but she was saved from rape, she said, by her young children who threw themselves on her. Sh. was robbed of all her belongings, "I told them I was poor and had nothing. But they stole 1,200,000 Afghanis, a television set, a sewing machine and a cooking pot – that was the whole of my property and they took the lot."

Sh. left the area the following day and on the way, said she saw a girl in a red dress being dragged away by force. When they returned later to get their belongings, she said she discovered that the night after her house was attacked, Junbish men had come to the home of her neighbor, a driver from Bagrami. She said he was beaten and his wife was raped so badly she could not be removed from the house by the soldiers.

Many witnesses in the Shah Shahid and Karte Naw areas told the Afghanistan Justice

Project that they left their homes because of rape by Junbish troops of their own family members or of neighbors or of un-named women or youths in their district. Families took what belongings they could take or at least took their female members out to what they hoped were areas of greater safety. Shah Shahid and Karte Naw was also an area made unsafe by bombardment; there was huge destruction of property as Junbish fought Hizb-e-Islami and later Shura-e-Nezar. However, witness testimony tends to cite abuses by Junbish soldiers, rather than the rocketing, as reasons why their families decided to leave the area.

A**.** was living in Karte Naw in 1993 at a time of fighting between Hizb-e-Islami and Junbish. "The plundering and looting of Gilam Jam people was on the increase and people were leaving their houses. We received permission from Junbish to take our belongings. But when we took a car and packed everything up, armed men stopped us at the Naqlia post. My son, A.J., was beaten and they

stole our belongings. I was released, but they took the poor driver of that car." At that point, said A., they heard that a woman in the neighborhood had been raped by Junbish men, "When we heard this," she said, "we didn't care for life, property or belongings, we just left the area." One or two days later, she said, her sons returned and saw Junbish men carrying away their belongings in the same car which they had rented earlier. A.'s home became a Junbish post and ammunition was stored there and, she said, "Our home was left in ruins."

Also pushing the exodus of civilians were the Junbish troops themselves. Many witnesses say they were asked why they had not left their homes yet: the inference always being that if they stayed they must be spies and therefore fair game for the looters or rapists. M.K., for example, was living in Sarak-e-Naw area of Karte Naw in Jawza 1372 (May-June 1993) very near a Junbish post during close fighting with Hizb-e-Islami. He was a Pashtun. He and his four brothers were living together with their father who was a rich man. "The number of our women was too many. The Gilam Jam people warned my father to leave the house, asking him which faction we were helping. They'd been informed that we were rich." M.K. said they took their female relatives out of the home and five or six of the men stayed to guard their belongings. "One day, about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, five or six men came, one with a big axe. They asked us why we hadn't left the area. We said we'd stayed to protect our belongings and the house. After hearing this, one of them broke all the windows, doors and mirrors with the axe. This was the final warning to leave, they said. When we denied having taken away any belongings already, they beat us more. They beat us and took everything, even making us carry our carpets and other belongings to the car outside. That was when we finally left our area."

Another woman, B., was living in Karte Naw district in, again at a time of heavy fighting between Junbish and Hizb-e-Islami. "They beat my husband and son and told them to hand over their money and said, "Why haven't you left the area yet? Who have you stayed to spy for?' Since we were Pashtun, they said we were working for Hizb-e-Islami, so they forced my son to collect our belongings for them." At the time, she said, there were tanks in the streets and no one dared walk outside. "They told my son, 'We'll burn you if you don't collect your

belongings and bring them to us.' They took my husband and threatened to throw him down a well. Then finally my husband and son loaded our belongings into their car. They didn't just take our belongings, but those of the whole area, coming back day and night." B. says that when they left the area, she made her son wear a burqa to protect him. This was after Junbish men came and raped their neighbor's son who had been left in the house to look after it after the rest of the family left.

Witnesses and survivors of Junbish abuses tend to use the terms *Junbishis, Gilam Jams,* and occasionally *Uzbekis* and *Dostumis* interchangeably. There are few named commanders in their testimonies. However, the districts where the abuses took place were firmly in the hands of Junbish throughout the war and witnesses repeatedly cite soldiers from the Naqlia Base as having carried out the abuses. As with Sh., cited earlier in this report, the base is also remembered as a place where women and girls were taken to be raped. While senior Junbish commanders lived with their families outside in other districts which were deemed safer, for example Wazir Akbar Khan and Microrian, the Naqlia Base was the logistics and command center for the faction. The high authorities of Junbish in Kabul were therefore placed very close to where their soldiers were carrying out rape, murder and looting. The abuses had no relation to factional fighting and appear to have been carried out solely because soldiers could get away with it. These patterns of abuses and the impunity with which Junbish troops carried them out recalls the earlier excesses of the Jauzjan militia. In both cases, troops deployed from outside their home area were allowed to prey on civilians, with the connivance or the indifference of the high command. In the later part of the 1990s, however, it became apparent that the actions of Junbish troops were no better in northern Afghanistan.

In the years after 1992, the Pashtun populated zone in central Balkh, under local Mujahideen and local militia forces, experienced widespread abuses, particularly the abduction of women. Given the stigma associated with these abuses, it has been difficult to obtain direct testimony about individual cases. One woman, R., spoke to the Afghanistan Justice Project about the abduction of her cousin, Ra., by Junbish soldiers in Mazar-i-Sharif in 1993. She said Ra. was

kidnapped from her home, raped and kept for two years, although whether she finally managed to escape or was released, R. does not know, "Her poor family hid the case from their relatives because they were so ashamed," she said, "No one dares to speak about their daughters."

A female international agency staff member was raped by forces belonging to Hizb-e-Wahdat.

Another woman, Sh., has given the Afghanistan Justice Project detailed testimony about being raped by Junbish soldiers. She could not provide precise dates, but stated that it occurred around the time of fighting between Junbish and the Taliban. From the account, the incident appears to have taken place after Malik ousted Dostum.221 She said she was a newlywed in 1997 when fighting started between Junbish and the Taliban in the city. Her husband, H., an ethnic Turkman, had gone to his shop in the morning, but had not returned when night came. She spent the evening at her home which was near the shrine in the center of Mazar-i-Sharif, with her mother-in-law, listening to the sound of heavy weapons and artillery. The following morning at 10 o'clock, she said, five or six Junbish men broke into her home. "I was a three-month married bride and had beautiful clothes on, gold earrings, necklace and rings and a good watch. They took all the jewelry and beat me with the stocks of their rifles" Sh. said they beat her mother-in-law and she lost consciousness and stole two million Afghans from her box. They said if she made any noise, they would kill her. "After that," she said, "they took me to my own room and raped me."

Sh. said the first man stripped and raped her while the others watched, taking pleasure from the sight. "They were so strong," she said, "I felt I would die under them. I understood what was happening with the first man and the second and third and then I fainted. The others raped me as well. I beseeched them not to touch me, but they refused. Every one of them got pleasure from me and said how good it was to have a newlywed woman."

Eventually, said Sh., when she came round, it was evening and the sun had set. Her mother-in-law was still unconscious. The men had taken their entire property – money, jewelry, household goods and bridal clothing. "I was naked

in my room. I could just about put on pajamas, but I was bleeding and my entire body was black from bruising. My feet could not move." For two weeks, she said, she could hardly stand or sit, but she tolerated the pain, too frightened to leave the house to see a doctor. Her husband had still not returned.

"The pain did not matter to me," said Sh. "Only I was sad because of my husband." Sh. said that she and her mother-in-law stayed at home, afraid to go out and startled by every small noise. Eventually, she said, when she felt well enough to go to the bakery, people were saying that Junbish had raped many of the neighborhood's women and girls. A few days later when Junbish collapsed and the Taliban captured the area, she said the Taliban also looted people's property and she heard that they also took girls and women away. "I don't know whether it was the Taliban or Junbish who looted my husband's shop and killed him."

Later, she said, her brother-in-law came back from Iran and took his mother with him and her brother came from Kabul and took her back to his home. She is still living there with her mother and brothers. "I have no information about my husband," she said, "I still don't know whether he is alive or dead."

Shura-e-Nezar

One of the totemic abuses of the Kabul war came in 1371/1992 when a young woman, N., jumped to her death from an upper storey of one of the Microrian blocks in order to avoid being raped. Local anger was strong enough to give rise to one of the rare public demonstrations during Afghanistan's civil war, and the case became infamous. The Afghanistan Justice Project has spoken to Nooria's relations and neighbors who accused Shura-e-Nezar soldiers of attacking the family home, specifying Commander Sartor. They also accused Qasim Fahim, who was then head of ISA/Shura-e-Nezar Intelligence, but later became Defence Minister and Vice-President after the fall of the Taliban, of trying to buy the family's silence.

N. was fourteen or fifteen years old when she died. One relative stated that they had recently returned from being refugees in Pakistan and had gone to an uncle's house in Karte Naw, an area which was controlled by Junbish. They decided to move after one of the neighbors, a pregnant woman, was raped. The family went to Microrian, initially to an apartment on the first floor and then to the sixth floor in Block 16, where the mother thought they would be safer. The father would not let the girls got to work or school because of fears for their security.

H. said that it was February 7, 1993 and the night of the Islamic festival of Eid: the girls' grandmother had asked them to distribute *halwa* – sweets – to the neighbors. Later, in the early evening, H. and her mother were in the kitchen, her father and the other men were with guests in the living room and N. and her aunt were in another room. There was a knock at the door. "As my brother opened the door, someone put a pistol to his head and told him not to move. He shouted that there were thieves." The grandfather said he and his oldest grandson tried to stop the armed men from getting in, but two entered the sitting room. "They put their guns to the heads of our guests, so they wouldn't move," said the grandfather. "They wanted to shoot my grandson, but I attacked the gun and it fired into the air, instead." Eventually, they managed to get the armed men out, but they left their scarves behind. Then a neighbor, T., came to the flat and told the family that one of their rugs had fallen to the ground outside. The family replied that they had not lost any rugs, but that the men had injured their son in the foot and the grandfather in the head with their bayonets. By then it was dark, there was no electricity was out and they could not see each other. Suddenly, said H., they realized Nahid was not there.

"As we ran downstairs in a hurry," she said, "we saw that she had fallen on the ground face down. There was blood on the ground. She'd been wearing a red dress – that's why our neighbor thought she was a rug. Her veil had been left hanging on the corner of a neighbor's window." I., who was living in the same block, had gone to help when he heard shouting and saw several gunmen running away. "I was the one who held her," he said, "and I saw that she had already passed away." The family took the body to the hospital, and the doctors confirmed that she was dead.

The next morning, the family brought the body home. "The people in the area were all demonstrating," said the grandfather, "chanting slogans against the chief of intelligence, Fahim." A neighbor, M, remembered all the people shouting with one voice, "Down with Massoud and Fahim. They have caused this to happen to our daughter!" I.s, the other neighbor said the fighting was bad that day, with rockets and bullets flying, but, said H., no one was afraid, "They all said, they didn't care about their lives," she said, "they said they would all be buried with the body." On the way to the presidential palace, the mourners were fired on by a Shura-e-Nezar post near Jabha Milli Padar Watan and prevented from going further. After this, the body was taken to the family graveyard at Shiwaki for burial.

The following day, said the neighbour, M., Fahim arrived with several cars and body guards. An Afghan journalist, Farida and another reporter who lived in the neighboring block had called a lot of women together, said M... "Farida said she would throw her veil on Fahim and that the other women should follow her lead and damn him, saying, 'Today, this happened to this girl and tomorrow it will happen to us.' As Fahim got out of his car, said M., Farida Patkin tried to throw her veil at him, but he escaped, leaving so quickly, his bodyguards had to run after him to get into the car."

Later said M., at 1:00 a.m., Fahim and his men returned. They knocked on a door and asked him for the address of the girl who had jumped from the top window. N.'s father, grandfather and brother came down and speak to Fahim for half an hour. H. remembered Fahim coming with gunmen in twenty cars. "People didn't want to open the door for them, but finally they had to. They surrounded the block and Fahim came into our home with some of the gunmen. He told my father that they wanted to share our sorrow. He asked my father not to say people that people from Panjshir had committed such a crime against his daughter because the government would be disgraced. He wanted to buy Nahid's blood. His pockets were full of money and he showed it to my father, but my father said, "We are Afghan and we do not sell the blood of our dead. Give the money to those gunmen and thieves who came to our home last night and caused my daughter's death." She said Fahim was very ashamed and

apologized a great deal, again offering the money. "Several times, they threatened us, "saying we must describe the death in another way in front of the people, but we said we were all going to die some day and we would never lie."

Both H. and the neighbor, I., said that the armed men who came that night were from the nearby post at Firdosi School. "Their commander was named Sartol," said I., "but everyone knew him as Jungle. He was a terrible man with a fearful face and very long hair." Both said it was not the first attack on the area. H. said that before N. died, gunmen had tied a husband and wife in their bathroom and stole all their property. "Several days before this incident," said I., "they arrested a young boy and took him to the basement of that school. Then, they brought his dead body out of the school. They committed a lot of crimes, but people were so afraid that could not say anything."

As in some of the other instances of violence against civilians documented in this report, there is no indication that senior Shura-e-Nezar leaders ordered the abuses. However, they failed to take action against the commander and forces responsible, and instead attempted to cover up the crime.

Hizb-e-Islami and Hizb-e-Wahdat Co-operation

Two days before N. died, another woman, H., suffered gang rape in what she said was a joint attack by Hizb-e-Islami and Hizb-e-Wahdat soldiers in the west of Kabul. Two days before the end of Ramadan in 1993, a group of Wahdat gunmen came to her house wanting to search it. They left, only to return at 1:00 a.m., with men from the local Hizb-e-Islami post. There were six men in all, she said, and they entered her house after breaking a window. She said they beat her husband with their rifle buts and he fell down with blood on his forehead. Her five children began to cry, she said, and she herself shouted and cried. "They beat us all, asking where our money was. They began to search, eating all the candy and cakes and sweets we had bought to celebrate the Eid. They stole our nickel dishes, pots and radio." Hafiza said they picked up her twelve-year-old son by his neck, ordering him to tell them where the family's money was, and

broke the family's oil box to try to find any hidden money. "They beat me so much that I couldn't speak. Then they took me to another room and pushed me on the floor. Then, they raped me, one by one…They beat me with bayonets on my arms so much that for a month, I was in pain. They looted all my belongings, they raped me and then they escaped. The carpets and blankets were dirty with blood."

H. said that her attackers included both Hazara men and Hizb-e-Islami men from the nearby post at Char Qala Chardi High School which was controlled by Commander Shahin. The next day, she said, her husband went to both Shahin and the nearby Wahdat base, but they said the rapists had nothing to do with them. "So my husband came home," she said, "On the way, one of the armed men said, 'Those people raped your wife very well last night.' My husband was nervous, but he could do nothing."

A local man, A., who knew about the attack on H., stated that when both Hizb-e-Islami and Wahdat were based in Charqala Chardi, Shahin's base was in Charqala Chardi High School. "Shahin worked with the men of Wahdat, particularly a man from the Turkman clan of Parwan Province, who was red-haired and called *Rais Arkan,* (Chief of Staff). Hamayon Shahin and Rais Arkan would make their plans during the day that in this house or that house was a girl or young woman. Then, during the night, they attacked the house." A. said there had been a similar attack by a mixed Hizb-e-Islami/Wahdat group on the home of another neighbor, S. Mohammed. "They entered his house and saw that his wife had just given birth, so they didn't rape her," said A., "but they raped his sister and niece. They raped them for so long they lost consciousness. They also stole the money from a car which S. Mohammed had just sold as well as his wife's gold jewelry and their television set and other belongings."

A. told the Afghanistan Justice Project that his cousin, Z., had criminal links at that time with both Wahdat and Commander Shahin of Hizb-e-Islami. Z was a skilled thief, and when members of Wahdat looted goods from the shopkeepers, they stored them at his house. He then sold the goods on and they divided the money among them. "Z. depended on Shahin," said A., "he supported Shahin because of his own crimes."

In another case, Y. told the Afghanistan Justice Project that one night during the month of Ramadan in 1993, he was awakened by the sound of bullets and other "horrible sounds," when he was living in the Shah Shahid area of Kabul. He went to the house from where he heard the sounds to see if he could help. He discovered that the family there had been attacked by Hizb-e-Islami men. He was told that the armed men had gone first to the room of one of the brothers and assaulted his young wife. However, when the children began crying and making a lot of noise, the gunmen said they would not touch the children if the woman gave them the key to the yard. When she gave them the key, more men came in. One brother was dispatched to get help from the neighbors while the three other brothers stayed. The armed men told the sisters to go upstairs and the brothers to stay downstairs. At that point, Y. was told, one of the brothers decided to fight and grabbed one of their guns and it fired. Two brothers were seriously injured and one of them died. Two of the sisters were also wounded. The gunmen escaped, and Y. and other neighbors took the wounded brothers to hospital.

Another civilian who has testified to abuses by Hizb-e-Islami forces is J., who was living in Shashdarak and was the head of the workers at the Ahoo Shoes factory when the fighting for Kabul began April 1992. Hizb-e-Islami and Junbish forces were battling for control of his area, but it was men from the nearby post of Hizb-e-Islami, he said, who committed crimes against him. His family had decided to take their female relatives out of the area and only managed to do so with a great deal of difficulty. "If they saw the women," he said, "they might rape them." He was then alone in his home when armed men from the post came and took all his belongings, including a car and a motorcycle. "They were smoking hashish," he said, "and eating and drinking in front of me." Then they told him to leave the house. "I couldn't do anything against armed men, he said, so I left that evening.

"When I returned the following day, my house was burned and the Ahoo Shoe factory was burned – after they had looted everything from inside." J. stated that he later saw his motorcycle outside the Hizb-e-Islami post and complained about the looting and burning to the commander there, and then

asked for the return of his motorcycle. "The factory owned this motorcycle," the commander told him, and threatened that J. would be fined for stealing it.

Ittihad-e-Islami Abuses

In the tit-for-tat mass detentions carried out by Ittihad-e-Islami and Hizb-e-Wahdat in the early part of the war in Kabul, civilians were targeted by both factions. Testimony from Pashtun victims of Wahdat has been included in an earlier section of this report, but Hazaras faced similar dangers from Ittihad forces.

Z., for example, was trying to get his family out from Dasht-e-Barchi in west Kabul on 29 Asad 1371/ August 8, 1992, after his residential area came under heavy rocket attack by Ittihad forces. They could not go directly to Behsud in Hazarajat through Maidan Shah because it was closed by anti-Hazara commanders Turan Amanullah of Hizb-e-Islami and Shir Alam of Ittihad. So, along with seven other families from his village, he decided to try the northern route via the Khair Khana pass on the outskirts of Kabul. They were stopped there at a post belonging to the Ittihad commander, Anwar Dangar. The elders, women and children were released, said Z., and his three-year-old son tried to plead for his father to be freed as well, but said Z., "Anwar Dangar slapped him on the face and told him, "*Chocha* (baby animal) Hazara! Go away."

Z. said he spent the next year in captivity, passed from one Ittihad commander to another, beaten and tortured in a number of ways, including sleep and food deprivation, not being allowed to go to the toilet when he had diarrhea, having his hands and feet tied at night with nylon rope that left visible scars, being threatened with death and tormented with the bodies of dead Hazara prisoners, and asked where his house was as Ittihad soldiers launched rockets into his area of Dasht-e-Barchi. He was forced to perform hard labor, digging out basements and making roads. Unable to wash or change his clothes, he quickly got lice. "Our conditions were worse than animals' conditions," he said. "They violated human rights and dignity. They tortured us for being Hazara. We had no other crimes. We were only Hazara."

Z. said they were first handed over to Commander Hafiz, who was a sub-commander of Shir Alam; that first night, he said, they were taken to Shakar Dara where Hafiz insulted and threatened them.

The next day they were marched to Koshak village in Paghman and then to Qala-e-Qazi where Arab fighters told hem they wanted to kill Shias in order to go to Paradise. Then they were returned to Koshak where he and three other prisoners were kept in a basement and forced to work as masons for Noor-ul-Haq, another commander related to Shir Alam. Later, along with two new Hazara prisoners, he was taken back to Qala-e-Qazi, to the central base of Commander Naqibuddin where they worked digging trenches.

Finally, just over a year later, (13 Simbola 1372 / September 4, 1993), Z., says he was brought to Dewan Bigi in Kabul and detained by another Ittihad Commander, Jabbar, for three more months. He said that three children aged between 12 and 18 were killed in front of him, on the orders of Zalmai Toofan who controlled the neighboring post. He also said he saw prisoners from Afshar killed by Zalmai Toofan with a tank chain. Eventually, said Z., when he and five of his companions fell ill, they were released.

A similar tale of detention, forced labor and cruel and unusual punishments came from M., who was a laborer living in the Zone 6 of west Kabul. He said troops belonging to Shir Alam arrested him in the central Silo area, bound his hands and feet, blindfolded him and took him to Upper Arghandi. There, he said, he spent two months imprisoned with an old man and two boys aged between 10 and 12. They were kept in a dark room, he said, and given little food or water. He said he saw dead bodies and bones in the prison. “They made us dig basements for their houses and they beat me after interrogation,” he said. “I was young, but they were serious in their intent and beat me so much that at the end I was unable to stand easily.” M. was lucky, he said. One night, he found the chain around his feet had come undone. He managed to escape in the darkness.

Members of Ittihad have confirmed to the Afghanistan Justice Project the mass detention of Hazara prisoners. One commander said that when some of

his men were imprisoned by Wahdat, he would buy Hazaras to exchange for his people. “There were some cruel people,” he said, “who abducted people from the city to sell them. It cost about five or six lakhs Afghanis (500,000-600,000) for a laborer,” he said, “But a senior commander could be worth as much as one hundred thousand lakhs.

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ROZGARAN / Bi-weekly publication

"Kabulis write with their blood"

A special column for eye-witness accounts of the civil wars

روزگاران

سیاسی، اجتماعی، فرهنگی

Alas, our Frishta

When the rockets targeted Microrian, we took shelter in the basement and plunged into that darkness till late in the night and sometimes till the morning. We spent the cold nights of winter with a few blankets and a *sandali* (a common source of heat in winters where blankets are piled up on a chair with an electrical bulb underneath it, the heat of which warms up the blankets). Frishta, my little sister clung to my mother on those cold nights and sometimes asked, "Mother, will the schools start in the end of winters?" She had just finished the first grade. We all would look at her and no one had an answer. I was the only one to give her hope and with a fake smile I would say that the UN would end the war. She would ask me childishly, "Is the UN more powerful than the leaders?" None of us knew the answer.

One night when we were deep in thought about these questions an explosion behind the window of our room shook us. We all ran towards the basement. My mother called, "Frishta! Frishta! Be quick! Another rocket will come!" But it was too late. She looked at my mother with her usual calmness and was not blinking. I ran towards her. The flow of blood from a layer of the blanket made my heart tremble. My brother shrieked, "They have killed Frishta!" My mother's cries could not be heard in the explosion. Frishta did not see the start of school. We buried her in a pit next to the gate of the school at night with the continuous explosions around us. They said, "Let her be here temporarily, we will take her to the graveyard later." But the constant firing of rockets did not allow this. It seemed like she did not want to leave school. After praying we left her there forever. After we had fled to several other places they blew up her grave as well. We finally escaped to Nimroz.

Issue No. 09

My father and two sisters

Till that morning I had not seen the Mujahideen — youngsters wearing military clothes, walking and riding in Pickup trucks in the streets of Kabul, full of pride and arrogance. Dumbfounded, I was moving slowly on the roadside.

The sun had just risen in the eastern horizon and was spreading its light on the foot of the mountains of Kabul. I saw a junior official and said that these young men look so well-prepared. The man looked at me in astonishment and said in a low voice which became almost inaudible in the rustle of the wind, "The Iranians have equipped them." I returned home when it was almost noon. My old father was a low-ranking official who had worked very hard for many years and had been able to construct our makeshift home. We had no idea what might happen tomorrow. My sister who was a student of the eleventh grade asked me with curiosity and agitation, "Suleiman! Did you see the Mujahideen? On the radio, there is news of trouble between Hezb-e-Islami and Shura-e-Nezar. They say Dostum has joined hands with Massoud." I said a little worriedly, "Everything will be fine. Here the Hezb-e-Wahdat has taken over." My father said nothing. We were a total of eight people and had a simple life. We did not belong to any faction or political current. Many of our relatives were living as refugees in Pakistan and Iran.

At around five in the evening the firing started. The people said they were gunshots of the Mujahideen celebrating. Sacks of sand were hurriedly brought in Pickup trucks and entrenchment began. A two-story building in front of our home was also made into a rifle-pit. My heart sank because our courtyard was visible for them and they could easily see my sister Shazia. We did not know about the enmity and complicated relationships between the different factions until then. I rushed out into the street. Our neighbor who was beaten badly was loading his clothes in a car. He said slowly, "Tomorrow you might have the same fate."

The other day when the sun had not yet risen, we decided to go to my aunt's house in Guzargah. We locked the door and got out. One of the armed men stopped us and said, "No orders have been given to you to leave your homes." We returned home and went into the road behind our home through our neighbor's house and headed towards Guzargah. We had not left Dehmazang when some continuous rockets shook Aasmayi. It was then when we lived our greatest nightmare. My father who had a heart disease was panting and following us. Two of my younger brothers and sisters were crying loudly and were left breathless for a moment after each explosion. I had just stepped into my aunt's street when Shazia screamed, "They have killed my father!" We

all ran to the roadside next to his body. A bullet had pierced his heart. We were all crying under the pouring rain. My mother hit herself and pulled her hair. Everyone was running around in confusion, fixed to believe there was no safe shelter anywhere. Every passerby told us to entrust him to God and find a way out for ourselves. We did not know what to decide. My mother's wails were drained by the horn of a car. A Pickup truck with a few armed men stopped by us and after a significant pause put my father's body in the car and took him away telling us they would bury it.

That night we wept till morning and found refuge in the corners of my aunt's home. Some food was found for the children. In the small watches of morning some rockets hit some houses in Guzargah and clouds of smoke buried the area in darkness. My aunt escaped to Chindawal along with her children and we fled to Bagh-e-Raees. We spent three days in a building whose owner we did not know. Shazia was the bravest of us all and under the constant gunshots she baked bread with the little flour we found in that building.

A week later when the fighting had lessened I returned to our home. The moment the armed men saw me they verbally harassed and began to beat me. They kept inquiring of my family's whereabouts. I pointed towards Khair Khana. After the intercession of a few aged men they released me and I went back home. A part of my home was destroyed by rockets. Seeing the only memory of my father destroyed, I cried and returned to my family in Bagh-e-Raees.

Two days later, two armed men saw us and expressed kindness. One of them said that if you "legally" give your sister to me, I will guarantee your safety and transport you all to Peshawar. I pretended to accept the offer happily and told them that my father would return in the evening and that they should come tomorrow. The "bridegroom" gave me one thousand Afghanis and left for Takhnikum satisfied. Shazia, while trembling like a willow angrily asked me, "Why did you promise such a thing?" I replied that, "If I had not done so they might have taken you away by force! They have seized tens of young girls and boys by force in these days."

In the afternoon we started towards Kolola Pushta on foot. We had not left the center of the city when the crossfire began. It was as if the whole world had attacked Kabul. There was fire and smoke everywhere and people were running around in confusion. It was a living hell. We were near Zarnigar Park when a

rocket hit a family fifty meters from us and shredded seven people of the family to pieces. I jumped into a stream in the roadside. My tears had dried by then too. I did not know fear. I had gotten used to running.

A colleague of my father lived in Kolola Pushta. My mother said Kolola Pushta was safer and that we would go to Khair Khana afterwards, as fewer rockets were fired in that area. "We will take shelter in one of the schools there," she said. When we reached my father's friend's street, the fighting had reached its height. At that point covering more ground by foot was nearly impossible. Shazia was carrying my little sister Yalda on her back and took my mother's hand from time to time. I was moving ahead when suddenly I was lost in an explosion. I was unconscious for a few minutes and there was silence around us. When the smoke cleared a bit I could not see a soul. My mother was calling in a low voice, "Shazia! Shazia!" Some people in the street helped me to stand up. My mother sat in the street, her gaze fixed on one point. When I regained strength, I ran towards Shazia. I found Shazia's hand and Yalda's right shoe. We buried Shazia's hand in a pit but my mother kept Yalda's shoe. To this day, she kisses that shoe.

Issue No. 10

And we wept till Taimani

Our family consisted of eight people and we led a meager life in Karte Char. My father, whose friends added the suffix "Khan" to his name, was a religious man who did not like the political currents. He had a small shop of spare parts of machinery in Jada. He looked very happy in those days. Every time he would roll his praying mat he would say in a loud voice, "Oh God! Help the Mujahideen return victorious." With these words I loved the Mujahideen without seeing them and hated the government for calling them Ashrar (Mujahideen were called "ashrar" meaning "thief" during the reign of the servants of the Russians) and propagating against them.

The sun had not licked the peaks of Aasmayi when the puppet regime was defeated and the "angels" entered Kabul. We celebrated and cried tears of happiness for their welcome. When I woke up, my father called to someone,

"Don't go to school today. The situation is not clear yet. Sayyaf and Mazari have exchanged harsh words. Last night I didn't sleep because of the sound of cars. The people in the mosque said that bunkers have been made everywhere. May God do all well!" I became very afraid. My 17-year old sister was even more frightened. She asked in a voice full of fear, "What will happen to us?" My father had no answer and looked at my sister's face thoughtfully.

A great disturbance took over Kabul. Till then I had not imagined the relationship between the Mujahideen factions to be so dreadful. I had heard that Hezb-e-Islami was always battling with the other factions. At about two o'clock, I went out to the road near our home. I saw the Mujahideen for the first time. They were all angry and looked at the pedestrians with rage. Looking at them made me scared. An old man who was walking quickly towards our street called out, "Oh son of Haji! Go home. The situation is not good." He was walking with such a fast pace that I didn't understand his last words. I was still trying to understand the man's words when a rocket hit Aasmayi. A sound like a thunderstorm took over Kabul. I had not yet spotted the place it had hit when hell broke out. In half the city Gulbuddin and Rabbani and in the other half Sayyaf and Mazari turned Kabul into a pit of fire in which the people of Kabul were roasted like a sparrow. Fire and smoke rose from all over Kabul. Everyone was running around to find a safe place. We took refuge in our basement. My father called, "Nobody should go out!"

Kabul became a prison for us. We spent the week in the basement and slowly became used to the explosions. We slept for at least two hours at night and the children cried lesser. My sister baked bread under all that shelling and it would be a great thing if we got food once a day.

One week later the fighting cooled down a little. There were gunshots between trenches. We could come out of the basement. They said, "The UN will stop the war. It has warned the leaders." We found the UN as our only hope; we had become hopeless about everything else. We were forced to give ourselves false comfort. More than three million people were like hostages in the city and we thought ourselves to have been sentenced to death. Those people who had seen the war between the Mujahideen said with heart-wrenching smiles, "They are perfecting themselves. Think about yourselves."

Two days later, all our money was gone. The morning prayers had not been

said when the wolves started attacking one another and the war started again with unbelievable intensity. Just as we wanted to go to the basement a rocket hit our home. A student of my father who lived with us was targeted by the rocket. Pieces of the rocket hit my mother's face and she was bleeding. We all became unconscious. My father ran in darkness and smoke. He shouted in a painful voice and I did not have the ability to walk. My sister's thigh had been cut and she was soaked in blood. Just as I saw the shredded flesh and bone of my sister's thigh, I screamed and put my head under my arms. My father picked her up in his arms and immediately ran towards the door.

He took my sister to the Red Cross. The doctors stopped the blood flow from her thigh and wrote a prescription for her other foot that was badly injured. My poor father had been looking for the medicine when a Pickup with some armed men stopped him and immediately took him with them. We had lost each other. My sister was lying injured and alone in the hospital, my father kidnapped, mother injured and I was with my younger siblings in the dark waiting for my death. Our street was almost empty. We had no news about our relatives and friends. Everyone cared about themselves. All the inhabitants of a city were in an abattoir called the capital city, waiting to be slaughtered.

Eight days later we got the news of my father from a group of armed men, "I have been taken as a hostage. If you can find 1000 lac Afghanis for my release, you may see me again otherwise they will shoot me. Your sister is in the Red Cross. Find out about her." My hair stood on its end.

The next day, when the rocket shelling had become lesser, I went to the hospital with my mother. It was unbelievable. They had also cut off the other foot of my sister. The doctors said, "We tried a lot but the medicine was not brought and we had no choice but to incise her foot." My sister looked really short in the bed. As soon as she saw us, she lost her senses. My mother was hitting herself and kissing my sister. I was crying.

My father was in the basement of the armed men for two and a half months, which has its own sad story. My uncle who lived in Taimani was able to save my father after a lot of persuasion and paying a 1000 lac Afghanis. When he came home and saw my sister without both her feet he hit his head on the walls and cried desperately because he had not been able to take some ampoules and capsules to the hospital.

One day the fighting decreased. People were getting ready for the next fight and were preparing foodstuff. My father immediately decided to go to Taimani. My mother, siblings and I started packing the most important things. My father said repeatedly, "Don't take the better things. The posts in the way will loot us. They may loot us for a couple of blankets." He brought two old men with carts whose faces reflected agitation and hunger of the three months. Rockets were hitting the Television Mountain and smoke rose. The sky of Kabul was black and sad. We were putting things in the cart and my father was tying them up hurriedly with the two men. The last thing which was to be taken to the cart was my sister. She was crying and I was soothing her. Suddenly an explosion blew the door of our home. I threw myself over my sister. When the smoke cleared, I ran towards my father but there was nothing left of him and the two men with the carts. Some passersby and a couple of neighbors came. There was nothing to be taken to Taimani. My uncle got there and we cried till Taimani.

Issue No. 11

The woman had surprising bravery

An aged man looked at me, then at my car with a strange agitation but said nothing. Instead of talking to him I told the loaders, "Be quick! If it gets dark on the way we might not see Kabul." The man put his hand into his pocket from time to time and quickly counted something with his fingers. I sensed his melancholic state and became worried, would this man pay my fare?

The last sacks of caustic soda and pine nuts were loaded. I had not yet took out the ropes when two women came with a cart loaded with cans of oil. They were aged. One was wearing a burqa and the other had wrapped a huge scarf around her. They were with the old man. These unfortunate people had lost all they had in the few months of war. In those days many unprotected women took food stuff from Jalalabad to Kabul and there a little profit became their income. I put some cans under the load and some under the car seats.

The scorching summer sun of Jalalabad was rising from the mountain tops. People were going in every direction in a hurry. The city was filled with armed men with long beards. Each one of them was searching some corner of the city

in case they found something. I was so fed up with the armed men that I thought I hated nothing more than them.

The car had not yet passed the Daroonta Tunnel when an armed youngster stood in our way and ordered, "Two lacs." The old man pleaded and said he had no more than fifty thousand. With my intervention he accepted one lac and we moved on. Till Suroobi several lacss more were taken from the man. He said nothing and repeated an abusive word under his breath. Seeing the post of Zardad who had put a large photo of Gulbuddin in the roadside my whole body started trembling. An armed man with hair till his shoulders guided us to the roadside with his hand and without any pause called, "Five lac Afghanis!" The old man pleaded with him. I also told him about the money the man had lost on the way. He looked at me with wrath and said, "Are we here day and night to protect you and your property because of your mums? You give money to others and not to us? If you say another word I will stab you. When I saw how extraordinarily he was shaking, I became silent. While the old man was counting the five lacs the armed man looked in the back seat and saw the oil cans. He looked at them wide-eyed and said, "You are moving these illegally?" The woman with the burqa explained that her husband had been killed and that her children had no one to look after them. "With these I will earn money for them," she said. The man laughed sarcastically and said, "Why don't you marry? If there is no man in Kabul there are many over here." He paused. "Go up the hill and take permission from the commander."

The poor woman seeing no way out got out of the car and climbed to the top of hill. She was panting and finally reached the top of the hill. The commander who had long hair sat in an old chair and stared at the woman approaching him. When she reached him she greeted him and then said in a small voice, "Mr. Commander, I just have eight cans of oil which I am taking to Kabul to earn for my children. Till here they took two lacs from me. I swear I have no money left. Even if you cut me into pieces, I tell you I have no money to pay you." The commander got up immediately and while insulting the woman with abusive words, kicked her stomach with such a force that the woman fell back a few steps. The commander stood on top of her with a look of pride and arrogance in his face, and then called on his Mujahid. "Keep one of her oil cans." And he went into his room.

The woman's voice merged with the grating sound of the car. She sang the most sad and painful song in history, the verses of which were composed of the sad sight of the commander kicking and the woman tumbling down. The woman had lost the profit of this trip. A dead silence took over the car and there was a knot in my throat. My heart was aching. I don't know how I drove the ups and downs of Mahipar. In the last descent the old man turned to me and asked, "I just have fifty thousand left. What shall we do about the last post?" We had not yet thought of anything and we reached the post.

Kabul was wrapped in a thick black cloud of smoke and the sound of explosions was heard. We were in a hurry so as to enter the city before it got dark. The sun did not possess much light and was settling down sadly with the blood of thousands of dead Kabulis. A tall man wearing black glasses with a long beard approached us and said, "Four lac Afghanis." The old man got out of the car and stammered, "Brother, I swear to God and Quran that I don't have more than fifty thousand Afghanis with me. The posts in Suroobi have taken all my money." The last sentence of the man was not completed before the woman with the big scarf said, "Brother, they looted us till here. There is nothing left for us." The man looked at the woman with an evil look in his eyes. He got nearer to the car and said, "If he does not have money, you have everything. You can free him from payment with your..." When he wanted to say something else I intervened, "We all have honor. This poor woman has lost loved ones and has traveled through this dangerous way, endured a lot of hardships and has paid two lac for this. You have taken this gun to protect the honor of people." I had not yet ended before he barked, ran towards me like an injured wolf and started punching my face and head hardly. The woman who was trembling like an angry lion after hearing those insulting words started calling names in a loud voice and took out her earrings and ring and threw it on his face, "Here! Eat it!"

The earrings and the ring fell to the ground and the old man picked them up and held them tightly. The noise brought the other armed man to the scene. The first one called to the other one, "They are not giving money and are resisting." And he took out the gate of his gun and hit my neck with the gun butt several times. They unloaded one sack of caustic soda and one sack of pine nuts from the car and loaded one on the man's back and the other on me. While beating us with the gun butt, kicking and calling us names they forced us to take

the sacks to the top of the hill to a room. They placed the sacks in front of a big picture of one of the leaders (I don't remember which one). The commander commanded, "After today never come without money. Our power is no less than any other post." When the car started moving my whole body ached and my breath was locked in my chest. I saw the sad tears of the old man in the mirror which flowed in his white beard and were not dried till we entered the city.

Issue No. 12

Qais Jan never returned

During the days that I graduated from high school and was looking for work, Qais was still in the eighth grade. My father had not gone to work for some days. Qais also left school, and we both were looking for jobs. Radios were on air only from Kabul. My father was constantly saying, "God forbid!" and was waiting for the issues to be resolved.

Our house was in the foot of the Aasmayi Mountain. My father came out on the streets after hearing all the noise being created by the neighbors. My father repeated these words again and again, "Zulaikha do not get out of the house and if you do, wear your mother's burqa. The general's wife came out of the house wearing a burqa. Mujahideen hate uncovered heads." Neighbors were saying, "God will do better, the situation is very crucial." With these words my heart sank, and I was in shock. Qais shouted, "Father, is our school starting soon? What do the Mujahideen think about the schools?" and my father replied, "God will do better soon."

We could hear gunshots, and with every shot my mother rose and then leaned back. At noon, our neighbors who worked with my father came to our house trembling and breathless and said, "The Mujahideen are divided into two groups. Hezb-e-Islami has taken over the interior ministry and a war may break out. Tend to your flour and bread." Saying this, they rushed back to their house. My mother grew pale and my two sisters and Qais were scared, tightening themselves around my mother. The gunshots increased and became louder and louder. A tremendous blast in Qala Aasmayi shook Kabul and we ran to the rooms, all lost. The doorknobs started shaking and it was like an earthquake.

My youngest sister cried softly and my mother tried to calm her down.

Another doomsday was on its way. Soldiers were shooting everywhere without any target and the heavy fighting continued till two in the afternoon. We went to our small basement and my mother was worried about missing her prayers. That evening we didn't even hear the Azaan (call to prayer), and my mother slowly proceeded towards the water container outside. Qais, trembling, shouted again and again, "Mother, do not go to the bathroom! Just do tayamum (dry ablution) here." She was not even on the second step of the stairs when we heard a loud cry. My father rushed to her, and I held Qais tight in my arms, but he was still crying, "Mother! Mother!"

My father did not have the strength to bring Mother down into the basement. I ran to her, but she was already dead. Her blood covered the whole outside. We dragged her down into the basement, where Qais and my two sisters wept over her dead body. We kept the body downstairs for three days, and when the fighting was calming down a bit, our neighbor and his wife came to our house, and we took the body upstairs. We were all weak and stressed, and we hadn't eaten or slept. The fourth night some five people from the neighborhood came and buried my mother near our house. When the hostility lessened, we tried to search for her grave, but it was so lost under the ruins we could not find it.

We spent two months in that basement. Our streets were bare. My mother's death did not depress my father as much as my presence in those empty streets did. Qais was the bravest and the most cheerful of all and tried to do everything he could. He was my only hope, and I swore that I would do anything to protect him. He suffered the grief of my mother's death deep inside and did not talk about her for the sake of my young sisters. My father did not utter a word in those two months and did not even seek forgiveness.

After two months, a famous ceasefire was announced, and only then we became aware of what the situation was. It was in the afternoon that my uncle (mother's brother) came to our house. He did not know about my mother's death. The poor man was a hawker in the Saray Shamali. When he sat and asked about my mother, everyone was silent. Then my father, with tears running down his cheeks, told the story. That day we all cried so much that we let out all the stress of the two months of silence.

My uncle stayed the night, and we decided that along with everything we have, we would move to his house. Qais cried not to leave our mother alone here, and my uncle tried to soothe him. We started off towards my uncle's house, and we stood beside my mother's grave, lost under all those walls tumbled down, and we cried hard.

When we neared the Pul-e-Artal, heavy fighting started all over Kabul. We were held down by the bullets flying all around us. My uncle yelled at the top of his voice to leave everything and protect ourselves. Finally we hid behind a stable wall until the fighting calmed down, but we were separated from my father and Qais. My uncle led us through all the twists and turns of the streets, and we finally reached the centre of the city and proceeded towards his house. We were all crying for my father and Qais. It was evening when my father returned and asked about Qais. They were also separated from each other. We waited for Qais for days, and months, and years, but Qais Jan never returned.

Issue No. 13

My sister

We lived in a rented house, and my father worked in one of the ministries and used to leave for work on his beat-up bicycle. I was in the eleventh grade at that time; my sister was in seventh and my brother in fifth grade. My mother worked tirelessly day and night. My uncle (father's brother) was an army officer. He sometimes used to come to our house and tell my father, "Enroll Razaq in the security. He can study as well as go there twice or thrice a week." My father had responded very harshly to that and said, "Until the day I die I will never let Razaq join the security. He should study and should not be concerned about these things."

My mother, who was always busy weaving, had collected some money, and I also worked in the factory during my vacation. So with the money that we collected, I bought myself a bicycle. I was overwhelmed and loved my bicycle.

I did not know why my father was against the government and supporting the Mujahideen. There were always arguments between my uncle and father and my father used to say, "When the Mujahideen come, they know what to do with traitors like you."

On April 28, 1992 the Mujahideen took over. My father was happy, but my uncle was depressed. On that day, I roamed about the city on my bicycle. Seeing the horrible and wild faces of the Mujahideen gunmen riding on Pickups, I knew I was wrong about them and the picture I had painted of them before was washed off.

Slowly the number of pedestrians in the streets declined. I was worried, and I crossed the street and started going faster. I was entering my street when three gunmen wearing turbans approached me and stopped my bicycle. Pushing me away, they said, "Go to your house and do not come out. We need your bicycle. When we are done with our work we will return it." I was trembling with fear, and as I was not aware of the disgusting nature of these Mujahideen, I really thought that they would return my bicycle. I proceeded towards my home. My neighbor came up to me and said, "Go to your house quickly. The situation is very critical and fighting will start at any moment."

When I reached home, my father asked me about my bicycle, and I said the Mujahideen took it. He was startled but did not say anything. Gunshots filled the air. I was in a hurry to have dinner and look for my bicycle. We had not yet cleared our food mat when the first blast shook Kabul, and then a number of gunshots flooded the air, and the cannon balls that were shot shook the weak walls of our house. We went to our basement. My sister was crying loudly, and my father held her tightly in his arms while trying to calm her down. Until evening, no more gunshots were heard from our house, but with the noises and the smoke that we felt around us, we knew our neighborhood was destroyed. I was still thinking about my bicycle. It was nine at night when my uncle came crawling into our basement and said, "The wall on the south of my house has tumbled down but no one is hurt. The Mujahideen will come and take me along with my family. You also should think about yourselves." My uncle had joined the Mujahideen in Char Aasyab, and because he was an expert cannon shooter they hired him, gave him a high salary, and took his family to Pakistan. My father thought that the Mujahideen would come and punish traitors like my uncle, but then we saw that they elevated him to a higher position. My uncle let his beard grow and then later became a commander of a group in Char Aasyab.

The war sometimes grew worse and then sometimes calmed down. We spent six days in that damp basement. We did not sleep, and looked like dead

bodies. The fighting became calm on the seventh day. My father decided to go out to get some flour and I to look for my bicycle. My mother yelled and cried for us not to go but we ignored her and went out. When we reached the Jangalak Factory some gunmen stood near the road, keeping an eye on us. We got closer and I told them about the appearance of the three people and my bicycle. They stared at us in amazement and one of the horrible faces told us, "I know them. Just go through this way and walk behind that big building and take your bicycle." When we reached there, about thirty captives were sitting there guarded by three gunmen. They gunmen called us over. My father went ahead, greeted them and then told them about the bicycle. One of those armed men ordered us to stand among the prisoners and said, "During all this fighting you are looking for a bicycle? You traitors who support the government have looted the people for fifteen years."

They kept us until evening. A big portrait of Gulbuddin was hanging on the wall of the building of the Jangalak Factory, so we immediately knew they were the Hezb-e-Islami gunmen. Night fell and we were divided into different buildings. I tried not to leave my father, and he held my hand tightly. We entered the factory building, and they ordered us to break all the machines with the tools there. We worked until one in the morning. The man who talked on the two-way radio was the commander of the group and was ordering cars to be sent. The fighting calmed down and with the cars' arrival we had to load all the broken machines in them. I was terribly tired. I asked my father what to do about my mother, and he sat there, crying softly, without uttering a word.

In the morning, the fighting became worse, and we proceeded towards the openings in the factory. For four consecutive nights, we worked under fire. The fourth night a bomb was thrown in our neighboring block. The commander along with six prisoners was killed, and we threw their dead bodies into the pits. I was no longer afraid of dead bodies or bullets, but simply waited for death.

Finally, on the fifth day they freed us. My father's hand was hurt seriously during the opening of the machines. He ran towards our house with so much excitement that he did not feel the pain or exhaustion. Our street had disappeared under dust and devastation. Even the gate of our house was taken. When we stepped into the yard, we saw a stream of blood from the kitchen to

the basement. With loud cries we rushed to the basement. I saw my brother lying unconscious with his eyes popping out, my mother sitting motionless with her hair pulled out; leaning back against the wall with my dead sister under her veil.

Issue No. 14

They took Hamid away from us

Crossing the red line that every criminal gang had kept for them meant death. During those days, everything had become expensive in Kabul because they had closed down all the routes to the city. And even if something did enter Kabul, it was stolen by the criminal Mujahideen gangs. Death was very cheap and everyday about 1500 rockets were fired. No one knew of his or her loved ones beyond the red line.

Khushhal Mina was attacked from all parts and the Ittihad-e-Islami and Wahdat-e-Islami had taken it over, and sometimes they advanced and sometimes retreated. I lived in a house belonging to a relative of mine who had fled to Pakistan with my wife and three children. My eldest son Hamid, who had been promoted recently to tenth grade, was whispering with my daughter Najiba in the basement. My middle son was crying softly on the lap of his mother. At first, I thought he was sick, but then my wife told me that he was very hungry.

When the air became calm and the gunshots decreased, I decided to get some flour. I told Hamid repeatedly not to leave the house. There was no one to be seen in the streets. Luckily, far away, I saw an old man walking hurriedly along the destroyed walls, and we both walked towards the main road. We saw more pedestrians around, and I was happy and started walking briskly. I reached the main road when three gunmen approached me and asked, "Where are you going?" I replied, "I am looking for some flour." Hearing my accent, they tied my hands and threw me in the place where they were standing. Until evening, they did not catch any other prey. I do not know the time when the three men came, blindfolded me, and threw me into a car. They drove for half an hour, got me out of the car and took me into some yard and then into a

basement. Two people then came, and without questioning me, started beating me hard. I asked them repeatedly what my fault was, but they just continued abusing me. I was unconscious until late evening.

When I became conscious, I was lying in the yard and some people brought some food and water for me. Two people with their hands tied looked at me in desperation and disappointment. Night fell, and in the pitch darkness, I could hear the gunshots everywhere.

A group of Wahdat-e-Islami people was sitting on the roof of the house. I did not know the exact location, but from the mountains I could guess that it was the west of Kabul.

When it was completely dark, two people got down and started taking off my clothes. I could not utter a word but the other two captives begged for mercy and abused Sayyaf with all their strength but no one paid attention. When they made all of us naked, they tied our hands around the gate in such a way that we could not sit or move. Two men yelled at us from the top that if they heard us shouting, they would shoot us from there.

A storm of mosquitoes attacked us, and we could only scratch some parts of our body with the wall. The fighting was getting intense as morning came. Every time a rocket came they used to beat us up, cursing Sayyaf. We spent five days there, and our number increased to nine people. Every night they used to strip us naked, and the mosquitoes would bite us.

On the fifth day, one of the two captives who were the first ones there, died. Because he was the youngest and strongest of all, he used to get the most of the beatings. The last day when the three men with gunstocks were beating him up, he did not ask for mercy. The gunstock reached his neck, he gave a loud cry, and then his eyes were closed forever.

I shouted in those ruins from night until day, but no one heard. Morning came and I somehow escaped from all the fire and shots and proceeded towards the city. For eight days, I searched the schools and mosques.

Finally, I found my wife and two children in one of the corners of the mosque. As my wife saw me, she fainted. The other women in the mosque brought her back. When I asked about Hamid, I found that he had been out looking for me while I was kidnapped. He is still lost.

We were left alone

I was living a poor life with my father and three sisters. My mother died a year back after being unwell for a long period. My elder sister took care of us like a kind mother and my father earned our living. Two younger sisters of mine went to school and I had just started the twelfth grade.

One day after my father left home, we waited for him for hours. My elder sister was very worried. I quietly told her to relax and not worry for the sake of our two younger sisters. From that night the fighting started. Rockets from Char Aasyab continuously hit Aasmayi and our street. We were very worried about our father not returning, as he was also the only breadwinner of the family. My sisters called "father" and cried day and night. For the first time I tasted the bitter taste of having no father.

On the fourth day when the fighting cooled down a little, someone called me from the street. Because a shell from a tank had destroyed our door, there was no place for knocking. An old man with a white beard and bent back took me in his arms and said, "Your father is in the hospital. His foot is injured." My sisters screamed upon hearing this.

I hurriedly went to the hospital with the old man. My father looked horribly short. Both his feet had been cut. The moment I saw him my head spun and I fell unconscious. Till evening my father's state was became increasingly serious. He had lost a lot of blood and the serums were running out. The doctors were conserving medicine. I told a young doctor who was acting with extraordinary patience and kindness with his patients, "I will give blood to my father." The doctor kissed my forehead and said, "He doesn't need blood. You go back to your sisters and make sure you come to the hospital tomorrow."

My sisters were leaning on one another in a corner of the basement. The moment they saw me they all started crying. That night we shared the pain and soreness of one month with each other. Late at night, my sisters went to sleep, but I was wide-awake till morning. I thought about my father and our future without him. In the morning, such a fierce fighting began that no one was able to go out. It continued for two days. I even forgot tears and crying. I was thinking about my sisters' provisions. The last sack of flour that my father had brought was half-gone.

On the third day, the factions ceased the fighting to rest. I do not know how, but I went from Dehmazang to the central part of the city and then to the Charsad Bistar Hospital. There was a woman lying in my father's bed who had lost a foot. I started crying. The young doctor, who looked like he had stayed awake all night, took my hand and said, "There is no use in crying. Think about your sisters' sustenance and your father's burial." They had wrapped my father in a white cloth. The ambulance stopped in front of our home beneath the shower of gunshots. They put the dead body in the street and left. With the help of three of my neighbors, I buried my father in the corner of our house. The four of us felt lonely for the first time without our mother and father. My father slept forever under a load of soil in the corner of our lawn without any relatives, friends, and funeral and without any charity.

Issue No. 16

The burning of my two children

I was a driver in one of the ministries. Two young children of mine went to school. My wife had been sick for a long time and my salary was just enough to run our lives so I could not treat my wife. My small son was in the fourth grade and my daughter in the third. We lived in a shabby house that I had inherited from my father near Dehmazang. My elder son had been engaged four months back under his mother's pursues.

For two months Kabul was burning in explosions and fire and we had to stay locked in a damp basement. We decided that as soon as the fighting cooled down, we would go to Taimani where my son's fiancé's family lived. At around ten o'clock, the fighting decreased. We quickly collected the most important of our things. My wife cried bitterly and was looking for the appliances of the kitchen under the remains of an explosion. My little daughter sat in a corner filled with grief and pain and continuously said in a low voice, "Let's be quick. Father, let us be quick. The fighting is picking up pace." I had to leave a house in which I had lived for sixty years in the mouth of fire. It was not strange that tears were streaming down my wrinkled face. Just as I started to step on the door of the hall, I heard a painful scream from my daughter. I ran and saw her soaked in blood. A

bullet had hit her thigh. The world turned black. My sons ran to her and her mother was shouting. I picked her up and don't know how I reached the hospital. They stopped the blood and after three days when she was recovering, we took her and went to Taimani. Some days later, under the shower of shots my son married. The wedding had no guests or food; there was no laughter or blessings. The bride was taken to the basement. We were desperate. The bride's family was moving to another province and after a week of the wedding, they went away and let us stay in their house.

We had lost all we had had. We did not have flour, food or oil. We did not know what to do. My elder son borrowed a cart and sometimes when the fighting died a little, he would transport families who were escaping. That way we spent our poor life for the next three months. At about ten o'clock in the morning, the last bullets of a thick battle were being fired at Sher Darwaza and Aasmayi. My son was fixing his cart in the lawn of our home, constantly calling to his brother, "Hurry up or else we will lose customers." Both of them took out the cart and started off in the roadside when suddenly an explosion shook the area. It seemed as if its aim was to hit my sons' cart. The rocket hit the cart and both my beloved sons were burnt to ashes. I ran but my feet did not have the power to carry me. I fell into the stream lining the roadside. People were running in every direction and I heard unclear shouts from every corner. One person called, "Two young boys burned in the fire with their cart." And I lost my senses after that.

Issue No. 17

My soul will suffer forever

In the year 1984 we left our house shops and migrated to Peshawar, Pakistan. My uncle's efforts to get back the house and the shops failed, and he wrote to my father, "KHAD has usurped all your property and we cannot reach the government. If I make a fuss, they will accuse me of having contacts with insurgents, so we did not try to get your property back."

My father became the clerk of a Pakistani tradesman and fed his family of six through hardships. In Peshawar, Hezb-e-Islami had a lot more power than the other Mujahideen groups. One of my class fellows convinced me to join this group

but my father was not happy about it. The meetings that were sometimes organized in Saeed Jamaluddin High School were on martyrdom and the Day of Judgment. The publication Martyrdom, which my same class fellow gave to me, was about these things. I went to Shamshatoo two or three times. They did not take the other groups seriously, regarding them "unislamic". Still, political power was most important to them.

After the year 1988 I was given the job of spying on people who recently migrated to Peshawar, and every fifteen days I attended a course organized by the same class fellow, wherein we were taught spying techniques, taking news and giving news. Gradually I found that I had been admitted into the Information branch of the party.

Six months had passed from the brutal infighting in Kabul. The party settled in Char Aasyab, bombarding Kabul with rockets and bombs. More people attended the meetings now; Massoud, and his new ally Dostum were held responsible for all the crimes and brutality. Spurred on by our leader's descriptions, we became emotional and believed him. One night our leader (the same class fellow and teacher in the courses) came and told me that we were leaving for Kabul, so we had to make preparations. He said, "We will go with a group of Jamiatis. Our leader is actually from our party but be careful not to blow your cover anyway."

I was excited to see Kabul after ten years. We were fifteen people, and later I found out that all of them were from our party. We spent the first night in one of rooms in the Defense Ministry, and then we later found out that we were posted to Microrian-e-Kohna. When we settled at our post, a meeting was held and after introducing everyone in the group, we were told our job was to decide where to hit the rockets as well as to collect information about the work and settlements of Shura-e-Nezar.

The group leader and my class fellow used to come with a group of his faithful friends and then leave the post, giving different excuses. They used to roam about Microrian, Wazir Akbar Khan and Shahr-e-Naw, point to a place, and it was bombarded after a signal. These people used to leave the post late at night with money and some expensive things; it looked like that they were looting. After some time they found some brokers and customers for the things, and the money used to be distributed among our band. After some weeks, I had several thousand dollars.

One evening the jeep of a Shura-e-Nezar commander passed the Pul-e-Microrian, and one of the people in the post quickly signaled. A shower of rockets was fired. By that time, the jeep had escaped, but 37 people including four women were killed, and pieces of their flesh were all over the place. That night I could not sleep.

Young and educated women were begging. Our post became one of the filthiest places, and after some twenty days, some of our men started having relations with the women. Gradually the dancing of women started, and at least once a week there used to be such celebrations. Everyone got addicted to this filth, and no one remembered martyrdom or the Day of Judgment anymore.

I searched for my uncle for several days. Our house and shops were all destroyed. Once I was walking in Pul-e-Bagh Umoomi and I met a relative's wife who was covered in a big veil and begging among the pedestrians. She was a teacher, and she had lost her eldest son and husband. She was scared meeting me at first, but then she started crying loudly. I asked about my uncle's family, and without any specific locations, she told me that they lived in the Saray Shamali. There was brutal fighting for three days that covered the city with fire and devastation. The fourth day I went to look for my uncle's family, and with a lot of asking and searching, I finally found my uncle's wife in a small room. With tears in her eyes, she told me how her husband and 12-year old son were killed and told stories of her devastating years. When I asked about Nargis, her young daughter, she grew pale and started beating her head against the wall and crying. Two years ago my uncle had engaged Nargis to me, and I had accepted. She replied trembling and weeping, "She leaves the house in the morning for begging and sometimes she doesn't return at night." I was shocked. Late in the evening, Nargis returned with a torn veil and her mother said, "Nargis! This is your cousin from Peshawar." She fainted immediately, becoming conscious later that night. Until morning, they were telling me stories of devastation and brutality in Kabul, and I cried the whole time.

The next night I went to my post, took a month's leave, and told them that I was taking my uncle's family to Peshawar and would be back. All the way to Peshawar, I thought about all the crimes and violence.

I was told that if I revealed any information about the party, I would be killed. So I married Nargis and went to Iran, from where I migrated outside the

country. But my soul suffers forever from all the destruction, killings and devastation that I witnessed and heard.

Issue No. 18

My unfortunate sister's blood

I had just graduated one year back. My attempts to find a job did not give any results. They said I could not be accepted unless I belonged to some faction. My father had passed two years back. I drove carts with my little brother and we lived a poor life. My sisters were in the eleventh and third grade. The radios announced the coming of the Mujahideen and Kabul was waiting as well as living anxiously. I was happy because I would be released from the army.

Armed groups came to Kabul. People wearing Commando cloths and riding Pickups were seen in every corner of the city. Those who knew about the disputes between the different factions talked about the division of the city and arguing about the inevitable fighting between the factions.

One afternoon we had not reached Jada when firing started near the Interior Ministry. We all went to the basement and could not step outside for a week. My little sister cried bitterly and stayed awake until morning on those first nights. After a week, the fighting became calmer and we went outside. Armed men in small groups of three to four people were walking here and there. It was the first time I saw the Mujahideen. One person from our street followed me and said, "I have decided to move to Shash Darak with my family. If you come with your cart and take my things I will be happy to pay you good money." I needed the work so I quickly took out the cart and loaded the things. We had not gotten out of the street when three armed men stood in front of us. One of them called in a coarse voice, "Don't you know that moving is not allowed." Without a pause, they started taking out blankets and toshaks (a mattress put on the floor, commonly used in Afghani households for sitting) from the things on the cart. The owner started arguing that this is looting and had not finished his speech when a gun butt hit his neck. The man hit the ground with such a force that he did not move for some moments. After that, they took my cart with the things they had separated for themselves.

My brother and I lost the only source of our income and cried all the way home. We told Mother the story. In the evening a huge battle started. It was as if all the factions were hitting Shah Shaheed. Shelling and gunshots started and suddenly a shot from cannon hit our home. A thick smoke took over our lawn and the light of the explosion had not turned off when one of us cried in pain. My mother who was lying flat on her stomach called, "Which one of you is hit?" All of us replied accept for my little sister, whose stomach had been ripped by a piece of the cannon shot and blood was spurting out. We could not go out for three nights. Our eyes were dry and not a tear fell. On the second night, we buried my sister's body in a hole with great difficulty and cried until morning. A few more rockets destroyed her grave as well.

In the morning, the fighting lessened. We quickly started for the city. There were gunshots in the air above our heads. We had left everything behind and with a few very important things; we reached Pul-e-Mahmood Khan. Suddenly intense fighting began. Bullets hit all around us. We left our things and jumped into a stream when a rocket hit some distance from us. We were lost in the smoke for some time. When the smoke cleared, I saw my mother lying motionless and soaked in blood. I ran shouting to her. My poor mother had lost her foot. A car came. I took her to the hospital urgently where they stopped the blood from flowing. After three days, she came to her senses and cried for my sister and brother. In the days when the fighting calmed, I would go out of the hospital to find my sister and brother but could not find any sign of them. After twenty days, I took my mother out of the hospital. After leaving my mother in Karte Parwan, I stayed in a mosque. For days, I searched for my sister and brother. Finally, after two months, I found both of them in Saray Khwaja. How they had gotten there was another sad and painful story. The four of us looked everywhere, rental houses, schools, and mosques, to stay in but found no place.

Issue No. 19

The skull of the head of a laborer

Meerjan was an ordinary laborer in one of the central mechanic shops in Pul-e-Charkhi. Like thousands of laborers, he was unemployed and forced to

stay home. He lived a very hard life with his mother, wife and five children in Microrian.

The war grew worse. Those who could afford it went to much safer areas, but this laborer could not. When he was pressured by his family to leave Microrian, he would say, "Neither any minister and lawyer lives here nor are there any offices here, and we are also very moderate and innocent people, why should we leave this place? Even if we do, where would we go? The whole of Kabul is bombarded with rockets."

People living in Microrian did not have any basements because they lived in apartments, so they had to move to the living room or bathroom. Not many days had passed from the start of the fighting when a rocket hit the laborer's apartment. The laborer came outside to put out the fire with buckets of water and urged everyone who stayed in the block to help him.

The fighting was in hot haste, and Kabul was burning in flames. Suddenly a blast hit the apartment where the laborer was standing and tore his skull into two, and a splash of blood was sprayed everywhere. His dead body was taken to his family who threw themselves onto him and cried loudly. Two armed groups of the Mujahideen, divided into two parts, fought each other as hard as they could on either side of the river of Kabul in Microrian, with all the fighting equipment that they had. It lasted for a week. The laborer's family, with hardly any possessions, fled to Darul Aman where they had a small house left from the laborer's father. The laborer's wife ran the house by collecting food from the grocery stores. The laborer's brothers helped them, but they were still leading a hard life.

When a 24-hour ceasefire was announced, people had some time to search for water and food and to prepare themselves for the hard days awaiting them. The laborer's wife, her youngest daughter, and her sister-in-law were in a car on their way to the centre of the city. The car had not even gained a normal speed when gunshots from the top of the Television Mountain hit the car. Shouts and cries came from the car, and suddenly it stopped. Streams of blood came out of the car. The laborer's wife had been shot in her kidney and so was her daughter. She was urgently taken to the Red Cross Hospital. Her sister-in-law made every effort to save her by constantly donating blood until she lay unconscious in a corner of the hospital. The next morning the laborer's wife

died, leaving all her five children to the grandmother. The grandmother did not eat or drink anything for five days, and then died on the fifth day.

Issue No. 20

My sister and the last cry of my mother

My father had resigned from work a long time back and drove a taxi. He was accused and arrested for having contacts with Mujahideen and was taken for investigation. He always cried, "I am tired of living in this seized city of Kabul!" The age of recruitment was increased by two years and he had to join the army, but he decided instead to move to Iran. He went that very night. We waited for him but we never heard from him again. My mother worked as an official in one of the ministries, and she fed my two sisters and me. She was very much against the government, but she could not do anything because she had to earn a living.

It was March 1992 when the Mujahideen were coming to power, and there always used to be heated discussions about them. My mother was really happy about the arrival of Mujahideen. At that time I was in twelfth grade and was really under my mother's influence, which was why I was very fond of the Mujahideen.

In the morning of April 28, 1992, my mother woke me up early to take the bread to be baked. The schools were closed. Pick-ups of armed men surrounded the street. Our street was connected with the main road so I went to see what was happening. There were some gunmen digging a pit. There were not many cars around except the cars of these armed groups everywhere. I saw some army officers wearing turbans and walking as if they were daydreaming, and it looked like they had not shaved for days. I was sitting there when my tailor neighbor said frantically, "What are you doing here? Quickly go to your house. A war can break out at any moment, Dostum has joined Shura-e-Nezar, and the army officers of the Defense Ministry have joined the Hezb-e-Islami. I don't know the other groups, but anyway go to your house."

I took the bread and ran as fast as I could and told everything to my mother.

My neighbor was right. The fighting got so bad that we thought the whole world was bombarding us. We could not step outside the basement for five days. My youngest sister got a fever, and my mother used to cry desperately. On the sixth day a huge rocket hit the southern part of our house, and part of the house tumbled down onto the basement side. It was horrible. Cries of the neighbors' rose suddenly. As the gunshots stopped for a while, I rushed to my neighbor's house. Pieces of their son Ahmad's flesh were wrapped in a cloth. His parents were almost fainting. Eight people from the neighborhood came and buried Ahmad's body in a corner of the house.

My mother decided to move to my uncle's house, especially when we heard that the gunmen were kidnapping young girls. After three days a 24-hour ceasefire was announced, and we packed some things and left the house. The whole neighborhood was destroyed and no one could be seen. Even Ahmad's family had escaped. My mother was carrying my sister Zeba on her back and walking behind me and Shogoofa, my other sister. We heard gunshots and tried hard to escape the rockets, when suddenly a rocket hit close to my mother with my sister on her back. My mother gave a loud cry, the last cry I heard from her. We cried for help but no one heard us. Shogoofa was mentally shocked, beating herself and pulling her hair out under the burqa. I was scared the gunmen would kidnap Shogoofa, and somehow convinced her to walk faster. We reached our uncle's house and told him the story. It was the first night that I slept without my mother. With only Shogoofa with me, I could not close my eyes until morning, wondering what would happen to us.

We went to look for the dead bodies of my mother and sister but could not find anything. Maybe the animals had eaten the bodies, or maybe they had been thrown into some pit. We spent a week at my uncle's house. Shogoofa did not eat anything and cried all the time. One day my uncle entered suddenly and shouted, "Your father is here." My father saw us and asked about my mother and Zeba. We told him the story, and he started crying, and then he told us his story of being in jail, arrested for being involved in drug trafficking when some opium was found in the car he was traveling in. He said, "I went to our house but everything was destroyed and finally I found you here."

The two brothers never returned

Most of the shops nearby us were closed. We had not yet arranged the shop when the shopkeeper in front of us closed his shop and came hurriedly towards us, "Close your shop. The situation is very critical. Gulbuddin's party and northern forces are fighting amongst each other and a war can break at any moment. Close your shop and do not leave money in your shop." As we heard this, we quickly closed the shop and rushed towards our house.

That afternoon the war started and continued till midnight. They said that Dostum's troops had driven Gulbuddin's troops out of the centre of the city. It was calm for some time but there were rumors that they were preparing their rifles and getting ready for a war. My father was on his way to his shop and no matter how hard we tried to stop him, he told us, "You do not know. I have to bring some things back home." He told us not to allow Hamza, my brother, out.

After a week, a one day ceasefire was announced. A big part of the south of Kabul was completely destroyed. Many neighbors had escaped and those who were staying back, pale and sleepless souls, asked about each other. I went to search for my father. The entire market was burnt and the shops looted. Our shop was also burnt down. I asked about my father in all the military posts and the gunmen replied in amazement, "Are you crazy? Do you expect us to notice your father in all these bombardments? Why did you let him out of the house? Were you blind not to see that a war is going on?"

My mother and sisters cried all the time, because we did not even find our father's dead body. That was the most painful part. After the short ceasefire, the war started again and missiles were fired everywhere. A large part of our house caught fire. The road across the Defense Ministry was completely bombarded with missiles and more than 100 people lost their lives. I, along with some other youngsters, had to put 74 dead bodies in a car. It was not daylight when we started packing to move to another part of Kabul. My mother was really distressed by leaving her home and sat in a corner of a room dumbstruck. Out on streets, gunshots passed over our heads. The fighting between Sayyaf and Mazari's troops grew worse. We all followed my brother while getting down the mountain and my mother was praying constantly when suddenly a bomb exploded near my brother and we all fell on ground. When the air became clear, my brother was

nowhere to be seen. My mother had fainted and my sisters were crying loudly. A pedestrian was signaling us again and again to run to somewhere safe.

With a lot of difficulty, we reached my uncle's house. There was yet another mourning going on. My uncle had gone to look for his shop and never returned. We cried for my brother and told stories of how the two brothers, my uncle and father went and never returned. We never held any funerals for them, and never did we find out how they died.

Issue No. 22

He took me to my wife's grave

My work in the city was to transport government officials around. The representative of the secret agency of Afghanistan (KHAD), a cruel man, told me one day, "The director of transport has made some ups and down, if you tell us about him you might get to be the head of drivers and get a higher position." I replied, "I am just a poor driver, my ears are closed and I don't have anything to do with the officials." The next day the director of the transport met me and said, "That Khadi wants money from me which I can't get and therefore he is looking for some evidence to give me a bad name." Some days later, the director and I were arrested. I went to jail for six months. I was tortured a lot during those months but luckily some folks of mine freed me. I never returned to my former job and started driving a taxi. I lived in the house of a friend who had gone to Iran. I was able to feed my five family members. My elder son was in fifth grade and my daughters were in seventh and third grade. My two brothers had already gone to Iran with my cousin and their family. Whenever I passed from the Khadi's house, my blood boiled.

I was in contact with a group of Mujahideen who were involved in the revolutionary movement and helped them financially and used to get receipts. My wife was very concerned on keeping those receipts because she was afraid the KHAD might find it and put us all in trouble. In the year 1992 the radios talked about the conciliation between the government and Mujahideen and international comings and goings increased in Afghanistan. For two to three months I had no contact with the Mujahideen.

Finally the Mujahideen came to power on April 28th, 1992. That morning I passed the house of that cruel Khadi. He was outside his house looking around, but as soon as he saw me he hurried inside. I met my taxi driver friend and he told me that the situation was very dangerous and a war could break. Hearing this, as I rushed to my house I thought about the rifles being prepared, the Pick-ups of gunmen driving everywhere and the bags of sand that were being transported everywhere. I reached home and told my wife, but before I had finished, gunshots filled the air and became louder and much harsher. My youngest daughter cried and trembled. It wasn't yet afternoon when some consecutive gunshots shook Kabul and then a terrible war broke. We moved to one of the pits we had built during the time of Najib's rocket bombardments. The war lasted for a week. Kote Sangi was between the troops of Mazari and Sayyaf. My youngest daughter asked for water all the time and my son did not eat anything and sat in a corner of the house. I was very distressed for my children and calmed them down, saying the United Nations would stop the war and that they would be able to go to school again.

On the sixth day, a rocket hit my neighbor's house and I rushed there as fast as I could. The neighbor's wife and two children were torn into pieces by the rocket and their pieces of flesh were scattered everywhere. My neighbor, who was an ordinary official in one of the ministries, sat in a corner of the house, shocked. His adult son and I dug three pits in the form of graves in their yard and buried the dead bodies. Traumatized, I hadn't left my neighbor's house when a rocket hit my house. I was crying loudly and rushed to my house, when my neighbor's son, who had fallen to the ground, stopped me saying, "When one rocket hits there is a possibility of a second one. Just wait for a while." After some time I went to my house basement and saw the shocked and pale faces of my children around my wife. They were all fine.

Most of my neighbors had escaped. I decided we would move to a relative's house. The war continued until one day a ceasefire was announced. Early in the morning we put everything in the car and drove towards my relative's house when five gunmen stopped us, got us out of the car and asked for the car keys. One of them said, "Get your car at the same time and place tomorrow." We pleaded to give us our car back but they would not listen. My wife trembled badly and my son cried. One of the gunmen was looking at my

daughter with wicked eyes and that scared me, so I gave them the car keys and we went to my relative's house on foot. My friend advised me not to look for my car. The war started again but the area where I stayed was a bit peaceful and a rocket seldom hit. One day I went out to buy flour when a jeep stopped and two men threw me in the car and blindfolded me. When they got me out of the car they opened my eyes and I found the Khadi who had tortured me. I was accused of having contact with him. I swore, saying he had tortured me for six months but no one heard it. They tied me with chains and tortured me for two days. After that I was sent to one of the posts and took water and ammunition to the top of the hill.

The Khadi who had tortured me was an expert shooter and through one of his friends he got into contact with Hezb-e-Islami and moved his family to Peshawar. He had been serving in Kabul, commanding a group of shooters. I worked for two weeks in Char Aasyab and I was extremely disturbed from the fact that I was distributing shells that were destroying Kabul. One night they told me to bring water, and as I filled the container a rocket hit the post. I didn't wait long to escape. Some of the Pick-ups from the neighboring posts rushed towards the post but their rifle shots missed me.

I disguised myself by wearing normal clothes from an old man. I saw my relative with his elder son. He hugged me and as I asked about my family, he did not answer and took me to a graveyard. He pointed to two graves, "This one is your wife and this one is mine. They both went out to get some flour and were bombarded into pieces by a bomb that hit them. I brought you here because I didn't want to tell this bad news in front of your children. They haven't eaten anything for a week and are always crying because they thought you were dead too." I stayed at my relative's house a few days and then migrated to Iran with my children.

Issue No. 23

I buried dead bodies consistently

One morning the laborers were discussing what they should do, and the discussion hadn't reached a climax before a rocket hit Khana Sazi and a black

smoke engulfed us. After some seconds we heard loud cries. When the air cleared we saw the room in a sea of blood. Two laborers (Saeed Majid and Abdul Razaq) were badly injured and Hussain the treasurer had lost his leg. From that day on, Khana Sazi and Qasaba fell into destruction; all rockets fired from the south landed there.

The next day very few laborers appeared at work. The war had worsened in Kabul and we were traveling fearfully and carefully when a rocket hit. I threw myself into a pit and when it was clear outside, I got up and shouted all the laborers' names. I didn't get a reply from Mir Alam, who was sitting thinking when the rocket hit. I ran to him and found his burnt headless body. I was trembling and yelling when everyone gathered and searched for his head. We found it around the bushes. Everyone cried as we buried Mir Alam's dead body.

Laborers with family had escaped somewhere and those left behind had just one day to decide. I waited for a while when Hussain came. He hadn't entered the yard when a rocket hit and shredded him into pieces. We took him that day and buried him in the area where we buried Mir Alam. A rocket per day hit the area where we stayed. The families took refuge in the basement. Going out was playing with death. Everyday some block caught fire and people went to put it out. Water and food weren't available. When the war calmed a bit we got some water from the well.

Then a ceasefire was announced. I, with some other men, went on a bicycle to get some flour. When we returned with the flour, some gunmen stopped us and ordered us to take the flour to the posts of Rabbani's troops. We begged but they started thrashing us. Still, they were good enough to give us 2000 Afghanis for the flour.

Again a second ceasefire was announced. Twelve laborers went to find out about their work. Before their departure, a heavy fighting was going on between Hezb-e-Islami and Harkat-e-Islami and these twelve people were forced to hide in a pit. In the evening when some armed men entered the area, these labors went to them to get permission to leave. Suddenly all twelve of them were shot dead by these gunmen. A day later we found out about their deaths. We reached the area under the shower of rockets, got their dead bodies and buried them. More families were now escaping from our area and

just the day after the burial, three rockets hit our area. We went to put out the fire and in this process the Said Qadir and Nadir buildings turned to ashes.

After three days, while we were busy putting a fire out we heard a loud blow like an exploding mine. Cries and shouts arose from the second basement. Saeed Muhammad, nicknamed 'the dumb', had gone to collect straws and was torn into pieces by this explosion. We buried his burnt body that evening.

Five of us went to Khana Sazi one evening. We heard gunshots and blasts. Everything was destroyed and many things stolen. The gunshots and rockets had made holes in the walls. Our friends told us to go back before dark and just as we were leaving, two cars of armed men entered. They went into a fury. My hand was shot and I fainted. My friends took me to our area.

My treatment was not completed when the unity between Dostum and Gulbuddin made the situation worse. Sayyaf's troops destroyed the whole of Khana Sazi with their rockets and arms. Hundreds of bombs and rockets hit Qasaba too and we ran to another part of the city. Later we fled to Istalif. When I came to Kabul after some years the whole Khana Sazi was destroyed and everything looted.

Issue No. 24

When I returned, they had killed my mother and son

Two months of war had made Kabul a city of death and destruction. I lived with my mother, wife and three kids in the Old Microrian apartments. One year back my father died. My mother went to his grave every Friday night. Now we lived in the basement for two months and did not even go to my father's grave. We lived a very hard life. My eldest son was in fifth grade, middle daughter in second grade and my youngest son wasn't in school yet.

Despite the brutal fighting, whenever I got a chance I got my car from my friend's garage and worked. Transporting families during ceasefires gave me a good income. Every time I left the basement my mother cried, kissed me and prayed for me.

On one of those days, the war worsened; the Hezb-e-Islami troops

attacked Massoud's troops. The Old Microrian was badly hit by this power struggle. Gunshots could be heard everywhere, continuous explosions took place on our block which set many apartments on fire. There was not a single wall that did not receive gunshots. Continuous blasts shook the whole place.

We were thirteen families living in one basement. Our house was on the third floor. In the afternoon a rocket hit and the floor above caught fire. The basement was full of smoke. I, with my neighbor, removed the wood that had caught fire. My neighbor went outside to put out the fire when he was shot in the shoulder and fell to the floor. I dragged him to the basement. He was a low-ranking government official and had rented my other house with his wife, a child and his brother. His wife and brother cried when they saw him. I tried to stop the bleeding but could not and his young brother took him to the hospital on his back.

The next day, a two-day ceasefire was accepted for the first time. When we went to our house, everything was burnt and destroyed. Around ten in the morning, I went for my car. Heavy fighting took place nearby. My car was parked there but luckily it was not damaged. I took families from Microrian to leave them in another part of city. The roads were destroyed, and the collapsed walls and trees blocked the way, but somehow we managed to get to our destination. I took some sacks of flour and on my way back some gunmen stopped me and asked, "What did you do before? We have got reports that you were in the army." I said, "I owned a mechanic shop and it's been some months now that I work with this car." Hearing this, they were pleased and removed everything from the car and took me to the Jangalak Factory with other captives. At Jangalak Factory everyone was busy breaking machines. I was ordered to get a car operating; otherwise I would not be freed. I quickly got on work with another driver they had brought before me. It was early in the morning when we succeeded in fixing the car. Later they gave another car for us to repair or else we wouldn't be freed. The man with whom I worked was a taxi driver. He cried hard as he talked about his desperate family and his stolen car. Two more nights we were busy fixing the other car and with six people, we got it to work. We were freed the next morning. I was walking towards my home when two gunmen came from some ruined buildings, took my money and then let me go.

It was evening when I reached home. Gunshots were going on but no one could be seen anywhere. When I entered my house, my wife shouted and fainted. I could not see my mother and my youngest son. Neighbors gathered and I asked them but none replied. Despite the ceasefire, a rocket had hit our block during the cease fire and pieces of that rocket hit my mother with her grandson and killed them immediately.

The neighbors had buried both of them on a hill. I went to a friend's house and later went to Peshawar in Pakistan.

Issue No. 25

I found his body in Charsad Bistar

I lived with my three daughters, three sons and wife without a job in Khairkhana for a few months. The money and food we had brought was almost finished. I bought a Macoich car from one of my friends and paid half its money. I started working but just in the area of Khair Khana and Taimani. When the rocket shelling started, I would leave my car and creep to somewhere safe for hours.

My work was forever interrupted. Many days I could not go out of the house. My income was not enough for our expenses. Schools were closed and there was no education so I sent my elder son to a relative's workshop to learn. In the days when there was no fighting I would drop him at his workshop near Pul-e-Mahmood Khan.

One of my friends wanted me to come meet him early in the morning with my car. I agreed. Early the next morning when it was still dark I reached the street. My friend was running with three women and hurriedly sat in the car and we started moving. When we had passed Bagh-e-Bala, the three women told me their story. They were speaking in Pashto. "When fighting and escaping started in the area where we lived we fell into the hands of one of the opposing bands. We were hostages in one of the posts of that area for a month. This morning we were successful in running away from there. We saw this brother in the street and asked him to save us for the sake of Holy Quran." My friend took care of them for a week and after searching a lot, found the

family of one of them and handed the three women to them.

My son came home before sunset every day. That day he did not come till evening. As the time ticked on, I became more and more worried. I went to his uncle's home and the night curfew began. I did not sleep till morning. When I thought about the shelling and explosions in Pul-e-Mahmood Khan during the day, I got more disturbed. Early the next morning I went to the workshop.

The owner told me that he had closed the shop and gave my son leave earlier the day before because of the heavy shelling. I started asking my friends. I looked for him everywhere till two o'clock. I thought he might have gone but did not find him. I started looking for him in the hospitals. In the evening, I found my son in Charsad Bistar Hospital, torn to pieces.

Issue No. 26

A bullet in my daughter's skull

On 28th April the Mujahideen entered Kabul and Mojadaddi took power. I left home earlier than other days and sat beside the main road. The private and government cars had lessened. Pick-up trucks with armed men wearing different kinds of cloths passed by us at high speed. The sun rose and daylight broke. I slowly started for Kote Sangi. I always walked that distance and in the evening parked my cart in an empty plot behind the cinema.

Said Ali used to come earlier than me every day but when I arrived he was nowhere to be seen. Just a few shops had opened. Army officers that passed by me every day with shiny medals, and sometimes bought cigarettes from me, were nowhere in sight as if they had been buried under the ground. Even the traffic police of the square was missing. I spread the things for sale and sat behind the cart as usual. Till about eleven o'clock no one bought anything. At this moment, the sound of firing rose from within the city. The few open shops were closed down and the shopkeepers fled. Everyone ran around in confusion. The firing increased as every moment passed. I packed the things on the cart and started to go. The door of the plot was closed and there was no one around. I started pushing the cart towards home. On the roadside, trenches had been made with

sacks of sand. Intense fighting began from Television Mountain and Guzargah Mountain. When I reached home, my wife and daughter were trembling.

In the evening of that day, fighting also started in Kote Sangi and the surrounding area of Seelo also turned into a battlefield. We took shelter in the basement and knew nothing of the war. We could not leave the basement for three days. On the third night the neighbor who lived across us came to us in the middle of the night and said, "Do you have alcohol? My daughter's hand has been injured." He spoke Pashto and we were on good terms with him. He also added that Ittihad was fighting with Hezb-e-Wahdat and Gulbuddin was fighting Massoud in the centre of the city. "Do something for yourselves; this fighting may last for a long time. If we find some way, we will leave everything behind and go to Wardak. You should also go to Ghazni. Belongings are not more precious than lives. They have destroyed many parts of Kabul in three days. If the fighting goes on like this, not a wall will be left in Kabul after a month."

I did not sleep a wink that night and was thinking of my wife and daughter. My cousin lived in Kote Sangi. I decided to contact him. When I came back home through a street in the south, I heard the shouts and cries of my wife from behind the gate. When I entered my house I saw that my young daughter was drenched in blood. A bullet had hit her head. I took her to the hall and returned to Kote Sangi to inform my cousin and some of my other friends. We took her body to the graveyard that night and buried her. Her husband had been waiting for two years to see her in Tehran. There were many freshly dug graves which showed the large number of dead in just Kote Sangi. We decided to leave for Ghazni a couple of days later. My wife shouted, "How can we leave without Masooma? How shall we answer her husband?" The fighting started again. Even under the rain of bullets from morning till evening some people came to the funeral. In the morning of the fourth day the fighting lessened. I left my wife at my cousin's place and went back to get money and a few of our things from home because we were going to Ghazni the next day. On my way, three armed men stepped out from behind ruined walls a street away from my cousin's home. They called me. They were strong, well-built men who spoke Pashto. First they searched me and took all my money. Then they forced me to go with them. I begged and pleaded them to leave me for the sake of Quran but it was useless. After we passed a couple of streets, a car stopped by us and I was put in it. When they opened my eyes, I found

myself in a huge fort. A vicious man came out of a room and started beating me. He was constantly abusing Mazari. I also started cursing Mazari with him but it was of no use. He beat me till I passed out.

When I opened my eyes I saw that my body had swollen. I was in a lot of pain. They didn't give me any food or water for three days. After three days I was sent to bring wood from the nearby houses with three other Hazara men who were younger than me. We worked till evening that day and were tied up at night. We could not sleep till morning because of the mosquitoes. One day we were supposed to pull out the handles of a house and distribute them to certain posts for burning. We worked till evening. We could not make a move because of the pain in our bodies, hunger and sleeplessness; but two heartless and cruel men beat us with their gun butts if we paused a little. We had to deliver the handles to the posts in the evening. Each one of us took two handles at a time and delivered them to a post that was some distance away and returned. We had not reached the handles when the sound of firing came from the street next to us and some gunshots returned fire. One of our guards went forward and asked who it was. But the firing made his sound inaudible and suddenly a few shots were directed towards him. He shouted in pain. The other guard stood behind us. He kept calling Suleiman and was trembling.

The young captive next to me signed with his elbow to say that he was going to attack the guard. I pressed his hand to show my agreement. He attacked him from behind and the three of us held his gun, disarmed him and then took him inside the ruined fort. We beat him so much that he went unconscious, maybe died. Then we started for a street in the south. While running I departed from the other three men. It was still dark when I reached the Kabul-Qandahar Road. After some time a loaded lorry came. After a lot of begging, the driver stopped and I told him that I wanted to go to Ghazni. The driver was a strong man with a long beard and spoke Qandahari. He looked at me and asked me why I was injured. I said, "My story is a long one. Let me get into the car so that I can tell you." I sat in the car and told him my story. He took out a stained cloth and told me to wrap it around my head. "Whoever asks about you say that you are the cleaner." This way I reached Ghazni. When I went to my cousin's home I found my wife in a very bad condition. She had thought that she had lost me as well. We went to Iran after a few days.

My father and young brother's grave

On the 28th of April the Mujahideen entered Kabul and severe infighting started. The Shor Bazaar became a hill of ashes. We lived in the central part of the city and we didn't think we would be homeless and devastated so quickly. As the infighting started, we went to our basement. We completely lost contact with our relatives and friends and we had no news from anyone. The bombardment of hundreds of rockets had transformed Kabul into a city of destruction and war. Our happiness after the downfall of the government changed into a terrible grief. For a week we were buried inside the basement and whenever the fighting calmed down, we checked on all our neighbors and every moment we got news that some family has fled somewhere and worried about our own. Many people were martyred in our street and they were buried inside the houses as no one could take the risk of taking the dead body to the graveyard. My father wanted to attend the burial ceremony of our neighbor but with a lot of difficulty we stopped him.

Finally a ceasefire was announced. I went to my shop and like other shops, it was completely empty. They had taken all the edibles on the very first night. On my way home, a gunman stopped my car and took all my money. I was really happy they didn't kill me. Fifteen days had passed since the constant fighting. Some of our walls had collapsed. Except for a few families, everyone had fled from our street. My father had sworn not to leave the house and kept insisting we leave.

Because of my father we had to stay for five more days. No one was left on our street and the area was completely destroyed. My elder daughter was severely ill and the dampness of the basement made by wife ill too. However we tried to take father with us, we failed. That evening as the fighting calmed down, I took my family to a friend's house. My younger brother, Razaq did not sleep until morning thinking about my father. We had kept some water and food for him. The fighting continued for two days and finally on the third day it lessened. My brother took the food we left for him and rushed to our house.

We waited till night but he didn't return. We thought he might have stayed the night with my father but he didn't return in the morning either. My friend and I went to our house. It had collapsed completely. I called my father but got

no reply. My friend was searching around cautiously; suddenly he gave a startling cry. He saw my father's leg. As I cried hard, I picked the leg up and we both carried it until we found a cart to take it to Khair Khana. The neighbors came and we buried it in the evening. I did not sleep the whole night thinking about Razaq; was he killed, kidnapped or what? In the morning as neighbors came offering condolences, I went out to search for Razaq. In the evening, I found his dead body punctured with bullets in a Red Cross Hospital. I took his dead body and buried it near my father's grave. There wasn't any tear left for me to shed. Every evening, I went to see the two graves.

Issue No. 28

My son's pierced chest

After ceasefire was announced, I went to check on my shop when I saw that they had taken the door of my shop and all the other shops were empty. All the people were protesting when some armed men in a car stopped by us and a strongly built man got down and said, "What has happened?" The shopkeepers started shouting, "They have taken everything from our shop and we don't know whom to complain to." The gunman replied fiercely, "You want to blame us for all the looting? This area is under my control. We are fighting day and night to establish Hezb-e-Islami's power and you are charging us of theft. If I see you again in this area I will shoot you all. Do you wish to fight against us?" As the shopkeepers heard this, they fell silent and moved towards their homes.

All our neighbors had left Shah Shaheed; no one had any news about anyone. I decided to go to Logar but I got news that there was severe infighting between Hezb-e-Islami and our tribes. Therefore I decided with my wife to move to Taimani as it was slightly more peaceful than other places. On the fifth day of the war, I found a cart and loaded all our belongings. As we entered the main road, three gunmen did not allow us to go and said, "Don't you know that no one is allowed to leave this neighborhood?" I pleaded, "Brother everyone has fled from here and our house is completely destroyed. We have nowhere to live." He answered violently, "Every family that leaves this place has to give 30,000 Afghanis." We begged and implored but they insisted and took the money.

We went to my friend's home. We were given one room and we spent the night at Taimani. After two days when the fighting calmed down, I went to check on my house in Shah Shaheed. As I reached it, I saw a group of ten to twelve gunmen taking out the doorknobs of my house and the neighboring houses. As they saw me, they took me too. Till evening I took out the doorknobs of the houses and with a lot of pleading they let me go. It wasn't dark yet when I reached my friend's house. I saw all the neighbors gathered around their doors. I noticed a thick fire coming out of the house and hurriedly rushed inside. A young boy who I didn't know told me, "A rocket hit the house and killed the young son of the family who came from Shah Shaheed." I started yelling and crying when I saw my son's body pierced and torn into pieces by the rocket. My wife lost consciousness again and again. The neighbors were picking up his body to bury it. I visited his grave while my wife cried for him day and night.

Issue No. 29

Eleven people from one house

Spring of 1992 was when the factions came and took political power. I had no fear because I thought that whatever government would come to power would not take away my job as a driver, and if it did so there were many other jobs for me. As I was in contact with my relatives in the south and sometimes I went to meet them, I did not fear the Mujahideen. The elders of my tribe used to come to Kabul often and the martyrdom of my uncle by the Russians earned us extra credit. High ranked officials of the government, especially members of KHAD were very scared and some of them escaped to foreign countries and some kept changing their homes.

On the day the Mujahideen entered Kabul I didn't go to work. I was waiting to see how the new government would treat the officials of the previous government because Mojadaddi had forgiven them all with just a swish of his pen, but many just didn't trust him. I was aware of the antagonism and war between the factions and had heard of bloodshed in wars between Hezb-e-Islami and Jamiat-e-Islami from the people of my tribe. Shah Shaheed was taken over by Dostum's forces and turned into the site of war between

Dostum and Hezb-e-Islami's forces. As our language was Pashto on the very first day of fighting we decided to leave Shah Shaheed. On the very first ceasefire four days after the fighting started, we went to Kolola Pushta and rented a house. For a week to come the fighting didn't allow us to leave our basement. We spent ten days in the congested and damp basement. Explosions, fire and smoke had stolen sleep from our eyes and our food supply was running out.

One day when the air was still dark we fled. We reached Kolola Pushta under the shower of bullets. The situation was better in Kolola Pushta and people could go here and there. After a few days I went out to buy some food for us. I had not reached the shops yet when a ferocious explosion shook the area. When I entered the house where the explosion had happened, eleven people were dying. Women were washing clothes in the lawn when a rocket had hit the house. I found the head of a little child a few meters away and joined it with his body. Hell had broken loose there. Pieces of flesh were stuck on the walls and the whole lawn was bathed with blood. Till evening we buried them in the foot of the Kolola Pushta Hill.

Every rocket killed people. Every family thought they would be next. I left my home for work two days later. On every other step, I saw dead neighbors and believed that this war would never end. I was immersed in these thoughts when an explosion near our home shook the earth.

I waited a moment to determine where exactly the rocket had hit when thick smoke rose from my home. People from everywhere were running to the site where the explosion had happened. My feet became weak and I don't know how I got to my home. The smell of blood and smoke had filled the house. Five people of my family were soaked in blood. Ibrahim my 12-year old brother and my young sister had been shredded to pieces.

The bodies of my uncle's wife, her 16-year old son Usman and her small daughter Masooma had been punctured and burned. In the evening, with the help of ten people from the neighborhood, I buried the five people in the foot of the Kolola Pushta Hill along with the other eleven dead people. I had no tears to shed for them. The next day I escaped to Logar through the route of Maidan.

Issue No. 30

Mother was left alone

My eldest son, Zia had passed through the twelfth grade a year back. He went to Iran with some of his friends out of fear of being sent to the army. For this reason the Khadis had disturbed me several times. When they took me to KHAD and threatened me I acted as if I knew nothing. "My son has been missing a while." My second eldest son, Kamal, was in the seventh grade of school. One of my daughters had married a few years back and had gone to Pakistan and another daughter of mine was in the ninth grade.

The four of us lived in a comfortable house near Dehmazang which belonged to one of my friends who had escaped to Pakistan. My friend had given her home to me and every month I paid a little rent to her daughter who lived in Microrian-e-Kohna. It was two years since we had settled in a house permanently and had good relations with the neighbors.

Kamal was always first in his school and was a very good boy. My uncle's son who was chief assistant in KHAD, tried to talk me into sending Kamal to KHAD but I really hated this and would reject this seriously every time. "Kamal has to study. He is too young for these things."

From March 1992, the government's activities were declining. I started the countdown of the government's fall. I would be freed from the pressure of KHAD and other factions. My daughter and son were returning from Iran and Pakistan and my family was getting together after years of separation and dispersion. At around ten in the morning, Kamal went out. He returned and said worriedly, "The Mujahideen are making their bunkers. The neighbor's son said the Mujahideen may fight among themselves so don't come out of your houses." In the afternoon fighting started in the city and in midday they were hitting Guzargah from the Television Mountain. Strong explosions were shaking the area and in fear and confusion we took shelter in a bunker we had made to protect ourselves from the rockets of the Mujahideen. The bunker was damp and after a couple of hours my wife started feeling pain.

A week passed and there was a ceasefire, but then the fighting started again. My wife was suffering from pain, while Zainab and Kamal did not sleep or eat anything. The walls of our home were destroyed in some parts and the neighbors had fled. One day at around five in the evening, my wife got out of the basement

to bring some water. She didn't want Kamal or Zainab to come out. She had not reached the container of water when she gave a painful shout and fell to the ground. I ran to her. A piece of some rocket had hit her head and she moved no more. Zainab and Kamal were shouting madly. I took both of them to the basement because the rockets were constantly hitting the mountain. Finally I pulled Mother's dead body to the basement. In the evening the fighting was less. Three or four neighbors came and we buried her in the corner of our home. Two days later we moved to my friend's house in old Saray Shamali. Kamal, Zainab and I settled in a small room. Zainab would eat nothing and cried from night till morning saying, "We left mother all alone in Dehmazang."

Issue No. 31

The cries of Ali's mother was up every evening

It was a little before afternoon. A woman was baking bread when I came up to her. She was making warm bread for me and I waited. Her 13-year old son called Ali asked her for bread several times but his mother replied with a pained and sad voice, "Until you don't collect twigs from the desert nearby, you won't get bread." The mother didn't have anything to burn in her clay oven for the next day and was asking her son to collect twigs for her.

Ali ran towards the south of the settlement and started picking twigs and shrubs. I was still talking to his mother when an explosion threw Ali on the ground. My heart sank and I started running. Ali's mother ran, shouting behind me. I was running with such apprehension that I didn't hear the cries of Ali's mother and how she was hitting herself. Some men and women came running from their basements to where the explosion had happened, as they had heard the explosion and the cries of Ali's mother. Ali had been punctured with holes but was still breathing. His mother was tearing her hair out and hitting herself; she was blaming and abusing herself about why she hadn't given bread to her loved one. Ali had lost his father a few months earlier when a rocket had hit him. He was first in his school and a very intelligent child. He kept shaking his head, comforting and assuring his mother not to cry and that he would be alright.

With two other men, I carried Ali on my shoulder to the main road.

Blood was dripping from his head to toe. A car stopped and we took him to the Red Cross Hospital in Karte Seh. The doctors were trying their best to save him. I begged everyone to try to save him, telling each and every one that this boy was the only support for his family. Ali's stomach was split open and his intestines had come out. I sat for two whole days beside his bed. He went to the surgery room twice. The doctors sewed the cuts of his stomach. On the second night, Ali's condition got worse. Ali passed away on the third day. The doctors were very sad and in the afternoon we took his coffin to the small settlement. A huge crowd gathered as all knew Ali and loved him for his cleverness and good character. Ali's mother, who had tied all her hopes to her son after her husband's death and the explosion had taken away her only hope, was shouting and had lost her mind. She threw herself on his coffin and would not let us take her only dear one to the graveyard. When she was left with no tears and couldn't make a move, we took the coffin to the graveyard and buried him next to his father. Ali's funeral took place in a deadly silence. After that the painful cries of Ali's mother rose from the graveyard every evening. She had lost her mental stability.

Issue No. 33

Skin of head and dripping blood

In those days, Gulbuddin was firing a barrage of rockets into Kabul, especially west of Kabul. The sound of rockets hitting people's homes was excruciating and their explosions even more horrible. Every rocket that exploded in a house was followed by the mournful cries from that house. After a while, the neighbors would come out of their shelters and basements and make it to the neighbor's house. Once, upon entering a house hit by a rocket, they saw that the family had gathered around the burnt and shredded bodies of some persons and were crying and mourning. Usually half or one-third of the bodies would be missing. The neighbors would actually come to bury the bodies of the dead people. They would separate the dead bodies from their families with great difficulty and, fearing that a rocket might hit them at any moment would take the bodies to the mosque. But the people could not

possibly bury the dead during the day. Every moment a rocket came, exploded, and killed people as they were lined up in the mosque. The people would wait for night to come and as soon as it got dark they would carry the dead bodies (usually seven to ten people) in carts or on their shoulders to the graveyard. The bodies would be laid to rest and the people would return to their homes quickly.

Finally, after two months of rocket attacks that left thousands dead and injured a temporary ceasefire brought a little peace. In Dasht-e-Barchi, where we lived, groups of people with grief-stricken faces would go to visit the graves of those they had lost. Others who came out of their basements after a long time went here and there to find out about friends they had had no news about during the fighting. Some shops opened and people poured there to buy a little food.

In those days I was a small boy. I felt good when I came out of the basement after such a long time. Even with all the stern restrictions, I went out to the street and shops from time to time and would return quickly. One warm day, I saw Said Aziz in the market with his baby in his arms and his daughter next to him. Said Aziz had reached the butcher's shop that was in Naqash Stop of Dasht-e-Barchi. I passed them in a hurry to reach home quickly and was just about to turn into our street when a rocket came from the east. I turned into the street in a flash and took shelter behind a cement pillar. Just as I stood aside I heard the horrifying sound of an explosion. I closed my eyes for some time and sensed nothing. Smoke had risen in the air and I could smell gunpowder everywhere. After some time when the smoke cleared and the danger was over, I slowly came from behind the pillar and went to the street to see what had happened. When I reached it I noticed the butcher's shop. The rocket had hit it and nothing remained of the shop or the butcher himself. I went on and saw half-burnt bodies of people that had parts missing as well. Fear crept up my whole body and my feet shook. I wanted to turn around and run but I noticed that people had gathered and were trying to identify the dead. They recognized the body of the butcher quickly. I moved on and recognized Said Aziz's daughter. A piece of the rocket had hit her and ripped off half her head. The skin of her head hung down along with a thin stream of blood and brain. On the other side I saw Said Aziz. He was lying motionless on the ground. The

people moved him to the side and realized that he had lain down on his baby to protect him from the rocket. He had saved the infant who had already lost his mother a few days before who had also died while saving her baby.

The group carried the dead bodies of the butcher, Said Aziz and his daughter towards the mosque. They planned to wash them and then bury them. During this commotion I saw something that I would remember forever: Said Aziz's daughter who had been hit by a piece of the rocket was in the arms of a neighbor. He was taking her to the mosque. I could see the skin of her head hanging and chunks of her brain and blood dripping to the ground. Still, the little baby was crying. Every time I remember this painful memory I curse all the criminal factions that had fought.

Issue No. 34

Nowroz died in my arms

I knew about the disputes between the factions in Peshawar and had witnessed their war on my way, so I was not very happy about their arrival in the capital. Sometimes when the neighbors prayed for them to come I would just look at the future skeptically.

After Guzargah, the whole south was under the control of Gulbuddin's party. The machines of the Jangalak and Afghan Turkani factories were broken down into pieces and sent to Pakistan during those very first days. Loaded cars used to travel at night and tens of people were hired forcefully to break the iron to pieces and load them on the cars. My wife looked after our home and didn't allow anyone to go out. She was very worried about her two sons and especially her young daughter. Word of commanders kidnapping girls deeply concerned her. Several times even when the fighting had calmed down Habiba's mother did not allow her to leave home and instructed her to hide if armed men came. "We will deny having a young daughter," she would say.

A month of bloody fighting passed. We spent the worst days of our life in the basement. On every given chance I would work in the shops of Agha Ali Shams, selling flour and oil; this way I earned our living in the days of war. Every time I would leave home I left my son in charge. Our area had been

destroyed and we were actually living in ruins. Gunshots were fired from everywhere. One day Ahmad rushed to me and between his sobs said, "Two armed men took away my brother Nowroz. Not only Nowroz but four other youngsters from the neighborhood were pulled out of their houses and forced to go with them towards the mountains."

I searched for him with an aged and respected man from our neighborhood whose son was also taken away. After a lot of searching we found the kidnapped boys with my son in the foothill in the evening. They were busy digging trenches. As soon as the armed men saw us they took us to their commander. The commander who was a tall man, with a long beard and his hair hanging to his chin asked us, "Have you come here to spy on us?" Crying, I told him, "Commander, these five young boys are from our street. One of them is my son and another is the son of this old man. We were looking for them from morning until now. Thank God they are with you and alive." The commander said with a deep voice, "You will stay with them tonight and finish the work of the trenches. Tomorrow we will let you go. If it wouldn't have been for your white beards, I would've sent these boys to Char Aasyab."

We worked till the evening of the next day carrying sacks of sand, and completed making three trenches in three different places. We were freed. When we returned home, we discovered my wife, Ahmad and Habiba had wept and not slept throughout the night. She was fearful of armed men and the possibility of Habiba being kidnapped.

The next morning very intense fighting began. A rocket killed the wife and young daughter of a neighbor. In the evening under continuous firing we buried their bodies in the corner of the neighbor's house. Our neighbor was a poor shopkeeper and all his things had been burnt in the fire. The other day with his only child, he escaped somewhere. While weeping when saying goodbye, he constantly advised us to go to somewhere safe.

The fighting continued for two more months. Our area was completely destroyed and hundreds were killed. Our street became completely empty after the neighbor's wife and daughter were killed. Eventually, we thought we should go to Khair Khana where my daughter lived. We decided to go there two days later. We climbed onto a bus that had more than fifteen passengers and was moving very slowly. We passed the Guzargah Square when suddenly intense

firing started from a mountain on our opposite side. The driver was just about to stop the car on the side of the road when the bullets like a storm swept over us. Painful cries rose from the whole bus. Nowroz was just about to move when suddenly he became still and leaned on the window. My feet froze and warm blood reached my shoes. I shouted and called Nowroz several times. He just looked at me once and then his head hung down. I took him in my arms. His body was getting cold and blood was sputtering from his abdomen. Those who had taken shelter ran towards the bus and pulled me off. I was still screaming and calling Nowroz. Then I became unconscious and didn't know anything. When I came to I found out that my feet had been cut in the Red Cross Hospital in Karte Seh. My soul was injured and without realizing I kept taking Nowroz's name.

We stayed in Khair Khana for another week. Akbar kept crying for Nowroz day and night. Afterwards, we went to Iran with the 500,000 Tomans that were not stolen by the hungry armed wolves because of our careful packing.

Issue No. 35

By a mourning mother

This story was told by a mother. We are printing it in her own words.

"It was October 10, 1992 when fighting between Gulbuddin and Dostum started. It was seven in the morning when they went to bring bread. They were eight or ten people and had got together to buy bread. They had reached the shop and not even bought bread yet when a rocket of the treacherous Gulbuddin hit near the bread shop. The rocket hit my son's heart and he died right then and there. My son-in-law was injured. Another boy who was 23 or 24 years old had come to his aunt's home to take her with him was also killed and ripped to pieces. On that day 31 people were killed or injured. The fighting was intense. On one side of the families was Gulbuddin and on our side, on top of our street and homes, was Dostum. The fighting forced us to keep the dead body of my son inside our home for two days and a night."

"May God never show the disasters I faced on that day to anyone. We were

in the basement having breakfast when the treacherous Gulbuddin's rocket hit and killed my dear son in front of the bread shop. When I got out on the lawn I saw that there was no one there. His father, sisters and brothers had all gone out into the street barefooted when they had heard that the rocket had exploded near the bread shop. I also ran to the bread shop in desperation, barefooted with a small scarf on my head. I saw my son soaked in blood in the arms of his brother. His sisters, brothers and father were all trembling and people who knew my son were all crying. I ran towards him. His father called, 'He has granted his life to you. Your son has been killed.' When I reached him I saw that he had already drunk the poison of death and didn't breathe anymore. They brought him to our home. First they put him in our lawn and then a person from our street said, 'For God's sake, let's put him inside the house at least.' Due to the fierce fighting and shower of bullets nobody could go out. That is why son's corpse lay inside the house for two days and a night. I wept from night till morning."

"It was six in the evening when people of Dostum's party spread and surrounded houses. My son said to take the girls into the basement. My son had been married for one and a half years. They went into the basement and closed the door. I was the only one next to my son's dead body, neither my two sons nor his father were there. Till morning we shared our grief. In that situation Dostumis entered our home through the rooftop. One of them asked, 'What is going on?' I told him that my son is soaked in blood and lying in front of me. 'What shall I do?' I asked him. He said, 'Be patient. War is still going on. There are many people being killed and wounded. You must be patient.' I replied, 'How can I be patient? My son's blood soaked dead body is lying in front of me, how can you tell me to be patient?' Dostum's men looted the houses and committed the most unchaste crimes."

"At around ten in the morning, the neighbors came who were no relation to me or to my husband. Later my two nephews came and said that there was no other way but to make a coffin. They made a coffin under the shower of bullets and we finally buried my son without shrouding him. It was the third day when my brother reached me in Khair Khana with a lot of difficulty and told me to go with him. He said, 'One of your sons is martyred. Let's go from here so your other children remain safe.'"

"We left the house without packing anything. We had some money with us and took it but left the house key for the neighbor. My two sons and husband were with me. Dostum's men stopped us and told us not to walk on the road, as there was a risk of getting shot. We went through another street when they suddenly started searching us. They took away my son's watch, my husband's money and my brother's money. We somehow reached the city where we stayed in my sister's house."

"Our house had been completely looted; the locks were broken, the doors were wrecked and the mirrors were totally destroyed. It was the looting and crimes of Dostum. He made us refugees. We were forced to live in other people's houses. Massoud went on his own way and Gulbuddin on his own and we are ruined and robbed. My young son's death is another grief. I cannot forget him and I think about him every second of the day. He's always on my and my family's mind. As I entered the yard of the house, I saw his room. What do I talk about? It is all sorrows and grieves."

After repeating these words, she put her head down and continued thinking as grief and pain flowed from her face. She was quiet and did not cry as there wasn't a tear left for her to shed.

Issue No. 36

One day, two burials

Finally the government was defeated and the war between the Mujahideen began. Rockets were fired at us from Bala Hisar where Dostum's forces were settled.

We spent those days and nights in a basement that was very similar to a small grave. In this way we spent ten months living between life and death.

On the 31st of December, the fighting had decreased for two days and we could come out on our lawn. The walls of our home had been destroyed.

I was in the kitchen and Atransa was sitting in the lawn when suddenly a rocket was fired from Bala Hisar and hit our home. Then a severe fighting began. We ran to the basement.

Atransa's body was left lying in the lawn. Mudir (her father) tried to get

out and bring her body, but the intensity of the war did not allow it. The children were crying and hitting themselves on the floor.

The next morning, the fighting stopped and my husband who had not slept the whole night shakily went out. He brought the body inside the house with great difficulty, as it had stuck to the floor with her dried blood. Some people from the neighborhood came and took Atransa to the graveyard. They buried her with her cloths. In the burial, some rockets hit the graveyard and injured two people. After their injury, my husband and a few other people immediately grabbed them and started for home.

My husband went to bring the spade and axe when suddenly a rocket hit near him, burning his body in such a way that he was not recognizable. I was not in my senses anymore and was hitting myself and pulling my hair. I didn't know how to take care of all my children. Finally they took Mudir to the graveyard on the 1st of January and buried him next to Atransa. After the death of my husband, heavy fighting continued for five days. I cried with my nine children and we ate nothing. On the sixth day the fighting stopped. I closed the door of my house and went to the graveyard. Many men and women were sitting next to recently buried bodies and were crying bitterly. I sat between the grave of Atransa and my husband and cried till noon. Then I started for home slowly. When I reached home,

I saw the door had been broken. I rushed into the house. Some men with long beards (a couple of them had praying beads tied around their necks) were busy packing the things in my home. They had broken boxes and tied many of our things up. I cried loudly, "My husband has been killed. The mother of these children has also been killed. You are taking away all I had, what am I going to give to them?" They continued calmly and did not pay a bit of attention to my shouts. Then they rolled some of our carpets that were in a better state. My screams were getting louder and louder. One of them pointed his gun at me and said, "If you raise your voice, I will tear you to pieces." I sat silently. Six people packed the things and left our home.

That day I beat myself and cried till evening.

The next day, I took nothing and ran away from Sangtarashi to Khair Khana with my nine children.

Issue No. 37

My son and husband

On the 9th of May there was no fighting and a warm sun was blazing. I was sitting in the lawn with my young daughter and two small boys when some rockets hit the Dehmazang Square. My husband had left in the morning to get flour as our flour would last only one night. We ran to the basement but no other rocket came. I got tense and told my daughter that I would go to check on her father in the crossroad. As I walked through the street people were coming out from behind walls and shelters and going towards the crossroad. A thick smoke still hung there. There was a lot of noise as ambulances reached the area and stopped. My feet didn't have any power and my heart was thundering. Somehow, I reached the crossroad. Thirteen people had been killed. They had put the dead to the side and were taking their bodies to the ambulances. Two armed men didn't allow anyone to enter the area and constantly advised us to scatter as there was a possibility of another rocket coming. I said with agitation, "My husband was here until now. He had come to buy flour. I want to see the dead bodies." People were looking at the dead turn by turn, trying to find their loved ones. Three women with burqas had been torn to pieces. A headless child lay at a corner. I went towards the dead men, where I found my husband. One of his hands and feet had been cut and his whole body had been burnt, but his face had suffered nothing. I screamed, put myself on him and tore at my hair. A few people ran and took my husband's dead body and brought him to our home. My daughter and sons cried and passed away from time to time. I was hitting me and I didn't know what to do. A few neighbors that were left came and wrapped my husband in a cloth. Then they took him to the mosque. About fifty people had gathered in the mosque. They put eight dead bodies in a car and took them to the graveyard. They were buried by evening.

My children and I sat till morning and wept. I didn't know how to earn for four people. My brother who lived near us was there during my husband's burial and he and his wife stayed with us for two days. The neighbors brought food for two to three days. The few thousand Afghanis that we had were burnt along with my husband.

On the fourth day, I sold two of my gold bangles, bought 35 kilos of

edibles (flour, rice and oil) and brought them home. We remained in Dehmazang for another week. The streets were completely devoid of people and walls had been destroyed. It was difficult to walk through the streets. My brother sent news that he had taken a home in Saray Shamali. He also said that we would be moving there the next day if there was no fighting, so we should be ready.

The next morning I sent Nadir, my second eldest son who was in the fifth grade, to bring a cart from the main road. Gunshots in air were continuing as always. Mount Television was hitting the trench of Guzargah and the trench of Guzargah was aiming at Mount Television. We were in a hurry to leave the area as soon as possible. Some time passed and Nadir didn't return. I was getting worried. I wore my burqa and went out to search for him. I had not crossed the first crossroad when I saw some people bringing his dead body. I fell on the ground and cried loudly. Seeing my son with his head punctured with bullets, I hit myself with stones. As I held his blood-drenched body in my arms and kissed him, my lips got bloodstained too. My son and daughter came crying and threw themselves on Nadir. No matter how much the people tried, they could not pull them away. Finally they got separated and my son's body was buried beside my husband's grave.

Issue No. 38

We lost Daud

After the downfall of Najib, the faction infighting started in Kabul and we went to the basement. My mother warned Daud to stay safe and not go to the fighting areas. Still, darkness prevailed over our lives.

In September 1993, a rocket from the Gulbuddinis hit a shop near which Daud was standing and wounded him severely. His friends took him to the hospital. It got dark and we kept waiting for Daud but he did not return. We got the news of him being injured. For two days we mourned until the third day an ambulance came and asked for a male to bring Daud's wounded body. As we had no other male except Daud, my mother went. After an hour she came home with Daud's coffin. We didn't want Daud to be buried so he could

be a guest for one last night, for his devastated sisters, ruined mother and his orphaned children. Daud had just turned 22. That night we cried the whole time and cursed his killers, the Gulbuddinis and all the Mujahideen factions for ruthlessly throwing rockets despite so many people getting killed and mourning.

The next day they took Daud's coffin and buried him. For many days, we sat with our eyes locked on the door, hoping that Daud might return and make us laugh, but he never did.

Issue No. 40

We buried eight bodies side by side

I had a small shop at Pamir Cinema and for the past few years lived in my friend's house in Kabul. (My friend had fled to Pakistan.) I had a hand to mouth life with my wife; two daughters, Najeeba and Aisha; and a son, Haroon. My son Haroon was in the tenth grade in Lycee Habibya.

A month had passed since the schools had opened when the Mujahideen factions came to power and the infighting started. On the 1st of September we were forced to move to Qalay Fatehullah. With the help of one of my friends, I moved to a house that was owned by someone unknown to me. My shop was looted the first day but I had taken the money and the expensive items beforehand. I checked on it frequently, but to send a signal to the thieves that the shop was empty, I did not lock the door.

In the last days of September I went to check on my shop when a fierce fighting started. I took refuge with some other people under a gutter in the corner of the street under the shower of bullets. Panicking, people ran everywhere and we finally reached a safe place. We weren't yet settled in, though, when a bullet hit an old man standing beside me and in a moment he was lost in the midst of smoke. As it cleared, he was in severe pain lying on his back.

I rushed to where he lay with streams of blood coming out of his shirt. As I tried to get him up I saw his intestines bulging out. The fighting continued for about half an hour when finally an ambulance came. It already had two

people killed and four injured inside, but still took the old man. I rushed to my house and thought about the old man, his miserable face in severe pain with his intestines bulging out.

On the 1st of January, unity between Gulbuddin and Dostum was formed and for two days and three nights severe fighting came to a climax. We did not come out of our house. On the fourth night, the fighting calmed down. We were out of water. The boys of the street were taking water from the well near our house but I did not want to send Haroon because he was young and could do something careless, especially in those two or three days in Kabul where mounds of dead bodies could be seen. Whenever it calmed down, I retrieved edibles from Chelsitoon and sold them near a shop in Shahr-e-Naw.

On the afternoon of January 5th I was still busy selling the edibles. Many boys had gathered near the well for taking water, including Haroon, when a rocket hit near the well. I was on my way home when I heard the blast and saw the smoke. I knew it had hit near the well. People from all over ran towards the well, including me.

Ten to twelve young boys near the well were palpitating in blood, and there laid Haroon. I picked him up and saw his stomach pierced by the rocket and his intestines coming out. Everyone took their loved ones' torn dead bodies and a doomsday surrounded us. My wife, Aisha and Najiba ran with bare feet and bare heads on the street, crying and yelling. We took Haroon and in a few minutes, he died. Mourning and crying came from every house; eight youths had died and seven were injured severely on a single day.

My wife laid her head on Haroon and did not know what to do. She was traumatized. She pulled her hair and cursed and abused the Mujahideen. I sat near the corner of the room and did not know what to do. My daughters did not sleep the whole night, saying Haroon was our guest for the last night, a guest who neither moved nor spoke.

My wife then blamed herself for his death, shouting and beating herself over why she had sent him for water.

The next morning we took the dead bodies on our backs to the mosque. All the eight youths lay beside each other. All men and women were mourning and people from all over the street gathered and mourned. The last time they saw the faces of the boys, some of the people collapsed. Men, women, children

and old followed the dead bodies and grieved. We buried the eight dead bodies side by side and wept the whole night without Haroon.

Issue No. 41

Death on birthday

Malem Amir Ahmad lived a humble life by making clay ovens. He had married several times and had a daughter and a son. He was against the Khalqi government and after the Russians invaded Afghanistan they turned KHAD against him, and for this reason he was usually followed. Finally he was arrested by KHAD and after torturing him severely they shot him. After Malem was killed, his wife and two children were left battered and ill-fated. His young wife had no other option except marriage.

Her second husband was a cultured, progressive-minded and kind man. He loved the two children of Malem more than his own children and took special care of them to such an extent that the children forgot their father and started to call their mother's husband "father". This way they got a father's love and affection from him.

It was July 23, 1988. Shameem was to turn 16 and a simple birthday had been planned for her. Her mother and father were very happy and busy for this celebration, along with her sisters and brothers. A number of her classmates had brought gifts.

She studied in Speen Kile, where all the students and her classmates loved her a lot. It was decided that they would light a candle for her in the evening after she came home from school. With these happy thoughts, she went to school that noon.

It was way past the time Shameem would usually come home from school and still she didn't turn up, which was unusual. Her mother started to

get nervous and checked her watch from time to time. She would not go out or sit down, and with her eyes glued to the door she repeated Shameem's name uncontrollably.

They decided to check out her school. Her mother was set to go but she had not left home when there was a knock on the door. Some of the classmates entered their house and while crying, dropped Shameem's bag and books. As Shameem had left home and was standing at the stop, a rocket had been fired from Paghman. Everyone had lain on the ground but three pieces had hit Shameem's chest and tore it. A boy next to her had been killed. They had taken Shameem to the hospital.

Her mother and family members reached the hospital in tears. They found her body wrapped in a sheet. Some of her teachers and classmates gathered around her. They cried loudly and said something unclear under their breaths. Shameem was taken home and was to be buried the next day. Her mother was hitting herself and pulling her hair. Her father went unconscious from time to time and was shouting loudly. Shameem was silent on her birthday. Her mother put her friends' gifts around her body and called every moment, "Shameem, get up! Light up and blow the candle." The next morning some of her friends and teachers guided her towards the Shohaday-e-Saliheen Graveyard.

Issue No. 42

My young cell mate in chains

It was June 29, 1992. I lived in Taimani in a rented home. My two sons, Nasir and Ahmed had graduated from school and were hawkers with pushcarts. The soldiers captured me in the morning while I was on my way to check on my shop. They blindfolded me and threw me in a jeep and after about half an hour brought me to some house. I did not know my crime. Till noon I sat in the corner of the yard and no one spoke to me. They had made a bunker with sacks of sand on the terrace of the house with a machine-gun placed behind it. Everyone in the post spoke Uzbeki, which I couldn't understand. At noon, two strong men took me to a room and without saying anything, beat

me so severely with sticks, gunstocks and kicks that I lost consciousness. I woke in the evening lying in a room. They took me to another room and I pleaded for mercy but all they told me was that the commander will talk to me. In this room were seven other people from different ethnicities and of different ages tied in chains. We were not allowed to speak loudly to each other. The young boy beside me had been beaten so severely the night before that he cried uncontrollably. With streams of dried blood still on his face, he asked me to massage his neck. While peeping through the door, I rubbed his neck.

I sat the whole night in darkness, with an empty stomach, feeling nauseous and dizzy. The next morning the commander came with two gunmen and asked all prisoners if they had informed their families to bring money or not. Anyone who did not have one, were sent to another room. Finally he turned to me and asked about my work. I said, "I had a shop which was looted completely. My two sons who are hawkers are the breadwinners of our house." He paused and then said, "Inform your sons to bring two lac Afghanis. Because your sons are hawkers, we will take lesser; otherwise we don't take less than a thousand lakhs Afghanis." I accepted and wrote a letter and gave it to the two gunmen. The three men who had refused to give money were beaten harshly and the air was filled with their yells and cries. At around one at night, the half-dead men were brought in our room.

I had written the letter to my nephew and my message to Nasir was to sell everything in the house and free me. That day my nephew did not appear at work as the whole family was looking for me. In the evening, the gunman to whom I had given the letter entered the room furiously and without saying anything, beat me with his gunstock. I was in a cold sweat and then lost conscious. When I woke up, I couldn't move my right leg. My thighbone was bulging out and hanging. I went into a deep depression because one of my relatives had such an injury that never got well.

The gunman found my nephew the next day and gave him the letter. He quickly informed Nasir and after gathering money from here and there and selling my daughter's two gold bracelets, they collected the two lac Afghanis and kept it near the Shah-e-Do Shamshaira Mosque. That night they didn't beat me and gave me some food. In the middle of the night, the cries of the

young boy in chains whose neck I'd massaged suddenly stopped. I touched his forehead; he was cold and did not move. He had died beside me. The Haji checked him too, confirming his death. The Haji called the guard a number of times and finally he answered angrily, "What is your problem in the middle of the night? Why don't you let us sleep?" The Haji told of the young boy's death. He looked at him with his torch and until morning no one came. In the morning, they came, removed the chains and took him out. At around eleven in the morning, they removed the chains from my feet and as I couldn't walk properly, they dragged and blindfolded me and took me to the car. Finally we stopped near the Taimur Shahi Park and sat there for a few minutes until Nasir came. My leg never healed. Whenever I remember those horrible days, I get a deep nightmare.

Issue No. 43

On the verge of death

One day the fighting calmed down and there was rumor of a ceasefire. I took my bicycle to go to school and decided to go from Paghman's double road and then through the Afshar area. When I reached the Qambar crossroad I met some shopkeepers standing in front of their shops. They were amazed at how I had come from that route as some groups had kidnapped people from that route. When I reached my school, some teachers were just coming out and told me that they did not get their salary and no one knows about it. To avoid a fight, I cycled through the main road towards Kote Sangi. I heard some gunshots so I changed my route and walked through Afshar. I was not halfway down the road when I heard someone calling me. I ignored him but then when I heard the trigger being pulled I stopped. That gunman, wearing a square-patterned handkerchief and with his gun pointing at me, told me to come to him. My heart beat hard and my feet trembled. I knew I was captured. The gunman asked, "Where are you from?" I replied, "I am a school teacher and I come from Qala Kashif". He asked, "Are you Sayyafi?" I answered, "No brother I do not even know who Sayyaf is. I am just an ordinary and innocent man." He said he'll take me to the commander to exchange me or else I will stay with

them. I pleaded, but he hit me ruthlessly with his gunstock and took me to some place.

I was taken to a concrete house that was half destroyed. In the front door they had made a bunker with sacks of sand. They took me to a basement without a door, so it was almost pitch black. At first nothing could be seen but then I got used to the dim light. I saw two people handcuffed. I asked them where they had been kidnapped. The first one was an ordinary laborer who had been arrested while he was on his way to work, accused of being a Sayyafi. The second was slightly aged and had been arrested merely because he was from Wardak and couldn't speak Farsi properly. I was very terrified. As a guard came out of the basement, I peeked outside. On top of the ceiling in the terrace of that house hung bloodstained hooks and I thought of the two people who were locked in the basement…

Issue No. 48

Courage of a taxi driver

It was one of the days of April in 1994. The situation looked peaceful because it was rumored that the factions would celebrate the victory of the Mujahideen on the 28th of April. I sent my son Saeed to check on my father-in-law's family and to bring some of the things we had left there. Saeed went to Karte Naw in the morning and I went to Lycee Mariam market as I was a hawker on streets. When I came home in the evening, Saeed hadn't returned. His mother was worried (he was our only son) but I told her that if he did not return that night, he would return in the morning. The next morning I left for my work at eight and unlike other days, I returned at noon. Saeed had still not returned. Fear enveloped me and I said I had to go to Karte Naw as soon as possible.

It was about two in the afternoon when I arrived in Karte Naw. They told me Saeed had already left the day before at about three in the evening. I left with my father-in-law in search of Saeed. In a lot of fear and panic we reached a post where a guard was sitting behind sacks of sand and kept a machine-gun in front of him. We told him about Saeed and he called for Farooq. A

strongly built man with long hair came out from a room. We told him my son's features. He replied, "Your son is with our men. Bring three lac Afghanis and get your son or else just wash your hands of him." We pleaded and begged relentlessly to reduce the amount of money but he was fiercely resolved.

I had some money, some I loaned from my friends and some I got by selling all my wife's gold jewelry. That is how I collected the three lac Afghanis. On my way with the taxi driver, two gunmen stopped us and searched me. When they found the three lac Afghanis they took it. I begged and cried not to take the money, that I had to give it to my son's kidnappers but he hit me with his gunstock and left. The taxi driver calmed me and said he knew some people in that post and he would take me there. Finally we reached Karte Naw and I told my father-in-law about the incident.

He was worried but couldn't do anything about it. The taxi-driver was very kind and he took us to that post. When we reached there, the guard called that man Farooq again. He came out and we told him the whole situation and the taxi driver gave him the direction of the post and the two gunmen. After a while, he ordered some men to take the jeep and take me to that post.

Three men got out of the jeep and ordered me to stay inside while they went in. The group leader asked the guard on the post about the commander. The guard went inside and after some time, the commander came and I told him about the incident. As I was talking to the commander, I pointed at the guard as one of those gunmen.

They all talked privately for about half an hour. Finally we drove towards the first post. I was very curious but too terrified to ask. The car halted at the post. All three people entered the room when an armed man came out and walked to the destroyed yard where some men were sitting in a corner of a ditch.

After half an hour I saw some men with Saeed and Farooq. Farooq said, "The people who had taken your money made a deal with us to give half of the money to us and with that money we are freeing your son."

I took Saeed with me and we rushed home. The taxi driver helped me a lot. If he had not been there, God knows what could have happened to Saeed.

Issue No. 49

Three graves

At two in the morning there was a knock at the apartment across us, where a teacher lived with his wife and two children. They had fled from Shah Shaheed. As I peeked through my door, three gunmen started beating the teacher severely. The crying of the teacher stopped but the shouts and cries of his wife and children filled the air. Then they were silenced by a gunman's threats. After sometime a knock came upon my door. My heart sank and I was trembling. My wife and three children hid in the bathroom. I opened the door and told them, "Please don't beat me. I will give you all I have." They replied, "Quickly, bring all the jewelry. It's already morning." I brought all of my wife's jewelry along with two lac Afghanis. They took it and left. In the morning I went to the teacher's house. With his face bruised black and blue all over, he told me, "They took my ten lac Afghanis and my wife's jewelry." I dressed his wounds and calmed him down.

On the 7th of January the war calmed down completely except for gunshots coming from Bala Hisar and Shar-e-Kona. My elder son Hamid and the teacher's eldest son Mirwais went to get bread. Sometimes the bread sellers sold bread on bicycles around the corners of the blocks.

After a few minutes, we heard a loud explosion and my wife and I and the teacher and his wife rushed downstairs immediately. Hamid, Mirwais and the bread seller were palpitated in blood, torn into pieces. We hadn't yet recovered from the previous night's blow when we got another.

My wife cried hard and hit herself. The teacher was devastated and sat in a corner and cried hard. Some of our neighbors, hearing the mourning gathered and told us to go home, as there was a risk of another rocket to hit that place. We buried the three dead bodies. After five days, the brother of the bread seller found us. We told him about his unfortunate brother and took him to his grave.

Issue No. 51

My son and brother

During the fighting, I sent Khalid a number of times to bring bandages from the pharmacy. One evening when Khalid was on his way, a rocket hit. It

killed many and a piece of it hit Khalid's leg. After hours of blood flow, we took him to a pharmacy and with a lot of difficulty stopped the bleeding. After some months, his wound got infected and doctors had to cut his leg off, whereupon my young son lost his mind.

The next day (3rd January) I was forced to go to the pharmacy as several of the wounded people had been brought to my house. It seemed like many people were wounded the night before. Until noon, tens of wounded queued outside the pharmacy. All the medicines and bandages were gone. I sent Abbas, my brother to bring medicines and told him to return as soon as possible because of all the wounded around me. As Abbas was on his way, a rocket hit him and shredded him into pieces. While I was waiting for him to bring the things, I got news of his martyrdom. As the wounded people waiting for the medicines and bandages got to know about Abbas, they started crying and cursed all the factions and their leaders loudly.

They brought Abbas's blood-drenched body to our house. His wife and children cried loudly and hugged him. I didn't know what to do; Khalid lay on one side, Abbas's body on the other. Finally we buried Abbas. His seven family members mourned for him day and night. Khalid, who lost his leg, fled to Iran and is still homeless. Whenever I sit behind the shop-window of the pharmacy, I remember those horrible days and tremble.

Issue No. 52

My son's blood

We lived in Dehmazang. I had two sons and a daughter. One day, when the fighting was less, I went to my shop to bring some things with my son Saeed Jan, who had just been promoted to the ninth grade. We had not started to evacuate the shop when two customers came in. They bought all the things in the shop for 122,000 rupees and said that they were taking it to Pakistan. They were good customers. We were also happy to have finished the shop's business as the shops were looted every night. I didn't think they would pay us that easily. They brought a car, loaded the things into it and left. We happily sat on our bicycle and quickly started for home. I was afraid in case any of the gunmen had noticed our money.

We had not crossed the Dehmazang Square when intense firing began between the trench of Guzargah Mountain and Television Mountain. I was very tired and with Saeed Jan sitting in front of me on the cycle. I increased my speed. People were running around looking to find a safe place. Suddenly, some firing swept the dust around us. Two people fell bloodied on the roadside. Just as I wanted to stop and help those two, I noticed that Saeed had slumped on my left arm. Warm blood was trickling down my body. The bicycle fell and blood was sputtering from Saeed's chest. I took him in my arms and screamed Saeed, Saeed! He just looked at me once and passed away. I jumped in a stream in the roadside and shouted for some time. I didn't know how to take him home and what to tell his mother. When his mother saw her child's punctured body, she started crying, hitting herself and pulling her hair.

That evening we took Saeed, along with two other dead people from our street to the graveyard.

Issue No. 56

Our Saeed

A sympathetic and kind neighbor of ours had a mechanic shop in Pul-e-Mahmood Khan. On the evening of July 18, 1992 he was coming towards his home when a rocket hit him and tore him to pieces along with his bicycle. His family was worried as it got late and he did not return. They told me about it and the next morning I went to his mechanic shop with his son. The junior workers had opened the shop but they said he had gone home the previous evening. We checked all the hospitals when finally we found his dead body in Charsad Bistar Hospital. When we took him home, a crowd gathered and all the neighbors cried and mourned loudly. With gloominess and grief surrounding us, we buried him.

The brother of the mechanic was Saeed Gul. He had become deranged eight months back during the severe infighting when a bullet had hit his left leg. He came to his brother's house along with his wife and son and held a funeral for a day. All the mechanic's friends and co-workers attended the funeral. The next morning I left for Chelsitoon. Saeed, my son, along with the mechanic's nephew Akbar, went to play in the ground near our home when cannon fire hit them. They

were burnt to ashes then and there. As the playground was away from the house, no one knew about it. It was late morning when my wife went to the mechanic's house to call Saeed for some work when she saw that Saeed and Akbar weren't home. She got worried and went out of the house when an old man shouted at her, "Sister, there are two blood-drenched and torn dead bodies of two youngsters. No one knows to whom they belong." My wife ran without thinking, crying and shouting. She took hold of Saeed's destroyed dead body and fainted. The mechanic's wife and children arrived and they took both the dead bodies home.

It was two in the afternoon and I was coming home with a sack of flour loaded on my bicycle. I was cycling with a lot of trouble when Ismail, the son of the mechanic rushed to me, crying. He tried to speak up but his throat was dry and with streams of tears running down his cheeks, he motioned for me to go home quickly. I rushed and left the sack of flour without thinking. When I reached home, my daughter Nargis was lying on the floor, shivering. I picked her up and went inside. Two women sat beside two dead bodies covered in white sheets. My wife sat unconsciously and had beaten herself so much that she was red all over and her pulled hair was everywhere.

Saeed Jan, my beloved son was wrapped in sheets. I removed the cloth from his face, his whole body was burnt. I tried very hard to keep myself calm but could not. My feet were shaking and Nargis started shouting and crying. All at once I burst into tears and cried, "Saeed! Saeed!" but he did not reply. We mourned throughout the night. My wife was unconscious and at times when she became conscious, she spoke irrelevant things. In the morning, the neighbors gathered and took Saeed and Akbar to the graveyard and buried them together. My wife and I went to Mazar-e-Sharif, crying the whole time. After a year we went to Peshawar and although my wife was against it and didn't want to leave Saeed alone, we had no other choice. The whole way she uttered and wept, "Saeed… Saeed" She hasn't yet recovered from this shock and she wakes up every morning and talks about dreaming of Saeed.

Issue No. 58

My four children

My children had gotten used to the war. We always brought water from newly dug wells and stored it. On the 29th of December Gulbuddin, Dostum, Mazari and Mojadaddi all formed forces and an extremely intense fighting began between them the next morning. Kabul had never witnessed such fighting before. One of the centers of severe fighting was the Microrian flats. According to media reports 2000 people were killed there on that day and a stream of blood flowed from this area. We took shelter in the basements. All the basements were filled with families who had escaped.

It was early morning on the fifth day of the fighting when I went to the kitchen while my husband was in the bathroom. A rocket hit our window. I fell to the ground. Thick smoke took over our home. I shouted and then passed out. I was unconscious for some time. When I opened my eyes, I saw that my husband was shouting and crying madly. Although my feet were weak I reached the children's room. Blood had reddened the whole room and my seven children were under the blankets. My husband had become so weak that he couldn't lift the blankets. Four of my children had been killed and three others injured. The neighbors came. First they extinguished the fire and then took my injured children to the hospital. My husband sat in a corner, motionless and speechless. He neither shouted nor cried. He kept whispering to himself. They wrapped my four children in sheets and took them to the graveyard. My husband was no longer mentally stable.

My three children were treated for a month. I went to the graves of my children once a week and cried till evening. With the coming of Taliban, life got harder for us as I wasn't allowed to work outside. I earned my living by baking bread and tailoring. Now I am a teacher. My husband has gone mad and the treatments have not helped him to recover even a bit.

Issue No. 59

The shredding of Naseem

The war was endless. Everyday a family would flee and houses were destroyed. Finally we also decided to escape to somewhere else. My wife's

brother, Naseem, lived in Microrian Char. After serving in the army he had become a hawker with me. In the twenty days that the fighting was very brutal, we didn't see one another and had no news of one another.

On the 17th of May the war had lessened. Naseem, who knew that Shah Shaheed was caught between the firing from two sides, came to our home in the morning even before we had come out of the basement and immediately decided to take us to Microrian. He found a cart and loaded all our things on it. He started for Microrian from the Kabul Nandari route and we followed him quickly. We had reached the main road from the first street when Dostum's men stopped our cart and said that no family was allowed to move. He started arguing with them and signed for us to move on. We had moved some hundred meters when a rocket came from somewhere and exploded near the cart. A huge fire went up. We threw ourselves on the ground. The whole area was wrapped in a cloud of thick smoke. My wife, daughter and son screamed and I didn't know what to do. After half an hour when the smoke cleared people started running towards the site of the explosion. Naseem, the cart owner and the two armed men had been shredded to pieces and the cart had also been destroyed. My wife kept shouting and crying. A Jeep came from a post and took away the dead soldiers.

A car came from Karte Naw. I begged the driver and with the help of the people around us put some parts of Naseem and his cloths in the car and went to Microrian. Naseem's wife and three children were crying and beating themselves.

The neighbors gathered and buried Naseem in the evening. I had to look after the two families as Naseem had just one sister who was my wife. Naseem's two sons and one daughter were quiet children and his wife was illiterate and had no job.

After two months Naseem's wife's brother came. He took his sister and nephews along with their belongings to Shamali. As there was no job for me in Shamali I had to stay in Microrian.

It was a warm June day when I was going towards Pul-e-Bagh Umoomi. A car filled with passengers reached Pul-e-Mahmood Khan and suddenly cross firing began between two groups on either side of the bridge. The driver of the car got injured and the car ran into a gutter on the roadside. A few bullets were directed at the car and shouts of pain rose from within the car. A bullet hit my

crippled foot. I fell on the road and pulled myself to the roadside. Some people were bathed in blood. After half an hour the fighting stopped.

Ambulances came and I was taken to Charsad Bistar Hospital. My foot was cut off that very night. The next day with a lot of difficulties my wife found me in the hospital. I went mad and have lived to this day with crutches and a crippled foot.

Issue No. 60

We were devastated by his death

My elder son was an orthopedic surgeon in Wazir Akbar Khan Hospital. On May 7, 1993 he took his salary and was returning from work when he noticed a woman with an injured leg on Dehmazang Square. Without waiting, he took his equipment out and went to help the lady. The Hezb-e-Wahdat criminals noticed the money in his pocket and shot him from their trenches. It was a shocking scene. He hadn't yet completed tying the bandage when he was killed.

The people took the doctor to the Red Cross Hospital in Karte Seh. When some people got to know his identity and address, they came and recounted the accident to our neighbors in Karte Char. None of the neighbors dared to tell me this dreadful news.

I was very worried because my son had been gone so late, so I took my bicycle and went out. One of our neighbors who knew about the death of my son told me to check the Red Cross Hospital first instead of Wazir Akbar Khan Hospital. I learned about my son at that point and with my second son, went to the Red Cross Hospital. There, seeing the dead body of my son among the other daily victims of Kabul, I was ruined.

That day there were a lot of rocket attacks. I could not find the chance to shroud and bury my son. I took his body to a place near the hospital where coal was being distributed and buried him without shrouding and for a long time I didn't even find the time to hold a funeral. My shocked daughter-in-law was six months pregnant with an 18-month old son. They made my mourning wife and I much more grieved.

Issue No. 62

The man and his 13-year old son

The fighting was very intense. The Mujahideen factions were killing people in their own cruel ways. After the martyrdom of my son, I decided to move to another place. There was a security post near our house. The bullets were flying everywhere; therefore we could not use the main road. I had young girls and I was very scared the gunmen might kidnap them. We were forced to make holes through the yards of our neighbors and only one person at a time could walk through them. When my daughter-in-law along with her son crossed one of them and entered a yard, she screamed, "There are dead bodies all over!" All I could tell her was to crawl over them, as there was no other way. Finally through a lot of difficulties we reached Chand Awal and held my son's funeral in the Andrabi mosque. I used to check on our former house in Karte Char every two to three days.

It was one of the autumn days of 1993 and I was going from Karte Char to Chand Awal. The roads were terrifyingly empty. I hadn't reached the Kabul Zoo area when I noticed a young boy and a man cycling hurriedly towards the city. The Kabul Zoo area was controlled by the Jamiatis and Wahdatis. Suddenly a bullet came from the mountains and I heard the outcry of an old man. When I walked closer, the man cycling was mourning, "Oh people! They have killed my 13-year old son, my beloved son is killed." When I saw the boy, he was still alive. I did not have anything to take the boy to the hospital. There were a number of handcarts on Pul-e-Surkh and I told the old man to stay put till I brought a cart. I wasn't far away when he called me with a heartrending voice, "Come back. He is dead." I did not know what to say or do. He spread his shawl and told me to hold his son's hands and lay him on the shawl. The old man told me, "Let's shroud the boy in this shawl and take his body on two bicycles." I was shocked and without thinking, did what he told me. The man was talking irrelevant things and ordered me to stop and drop the body on the ground. I did so absently. Then he told me to hold from the other end of the shawl and throw in the gutter. I was shaken and asked him, "What are you doing?" He replied with a miserable voice, "There is no other way. A rocket hit my house in Chelsitoon and my wife and six children are buried under the ruins. I was left with my only son and I came to tell my nephews to help me in taking my

children out of the ruins. Now where do I take his dead body? There is no time for shrouding and burying. I am going to see if the others are alive."

He was choked with tears and did not say anything and went away on his bicycle.

Issue No. 63

In the claws of Shafi the "Mad"

Life was extremely hard. My colleague and I had lost our jobs so we went to Shehzada area and worked as foreign currency exchangers. We were busy for some time but as life went on, our situation became worse. Gulbuddin's gangs did not allow any provisions to enter Kabul and the price of edibles was touching the sky. People were forced to get food on bicycles from Char Aasyab (Gulbuddin's area) and if any extortion took place it was the same price as in Kabul.

One day I was forced to go to Char Aasyab to get flour. I borrowed my friend's bicycle and started off. Rabbani's area was till Dehmazang. At Dehmazang (Mazari's area) some gunmen stopped and questioned me. A gunman shouted, "Shoot him! He is Hazara." I was very afraid and I started pleading that I wasn't a Hazara. Another gunman accused me of being Gulbuddin's spy and hit me with his gunstock and let me go. It was noon and the roads were empty. Fear engulfed me. I wasn't very far when a voice came from a building, "Stop! Where are you going?" I was so terrified that I lost control of the bicycle and fell on the ground. Two Hazara gunmen came and told me to go behind the mountains or else I will be shot. One of them asked, "Where are you from? Are you Panjshiri or Afghan?" I was so shaken that I couldn't speak. The other said, "No he is not a Panjshiri. He resembles Afghans." I implored, "Please let me go! I am just an ordinary official out to get some flour." He replied, "Oh so you are Afghani going to other Afghanis. It's good we caught you." The other one said, "Let's take him to commander Shafi to see what he says." As I heard commander Shafi's name, my hair rose and I was close to having a heart attack.

On our way, I quietly asked about commander Shafi. The gunman replied, "He is the Shafi who eats the raw flesh of Afghans." I had heard a lot about Shafi the "mad", that whoever went to him never returned alive. I was visualizing my

children's faces and trembled to death and the two were laughing. After entering some streets, we entered a house and they locked me in a room. There were stains of blood on the walls and the door. I had given up hope of remaining alive and prayed. After sometime, the two gunmen came in with someone else. At first I couldn't believe he was a human. He completely resembled a wild animal. He had an extraordinarily ugly face with disheveled hair and wore a long black skirt with many praying beads around his neck. I guessed he was Shafi the "mad". He was really crazy. The first gunman said, "He is Afghan and he wants to meet Gulbuddin." I was devastated. The commander growled, "Are you Afghan? Are you Sayyafi?" I replied unconsciously, "Yes but I am not a Sayyafi." He said, "You must be. Gulbuddini Afghans don't come here. Only Sayyafi Afghans can come in this area." He sent out one of his men and walked around the room. Suddenly he turned, "Have you heard about the Bismil dance (refers to the plodding of an animal once it is slaughtered)?" I replied with difficulty, "No sir." He retorted, "I am talking about the dance of the dead body. Once I behead you and pour hot oil on your neck and the blood flow stops, you will start dancing." I was bewildered. Finally I uttered, "Sir but what is my fault?" He answered, "Your fault is that you are Afghan and Sayyafi." I pleaded, "I am just an ordinary official. My children are very small and they are waiting for me. I am neither Sayyafi nor Gulbuddini and till today I have not been out of Kabul." He laughed, "Everyone says this. But you have a way to remain alive." I retorted, "What way?" He took out his gun and pointed it at my forehead, "You have to accept whatever I say or else be ready for death." I asked, "Whatever you say." And he replied shamelessly, "Allow me to pee in your mouth." I was completely stunned. At first, I thought I had misheard it but when I asked again he said the same thing with the utmost impudence. One couldn't imagine my condition. At first I thought he was just mocking to frighten me. I accepted it to escape death. He told me, "Bend down on your knees and open your mouth." He started undoing his pants. When he saw my hesitation he inserted bullets in his gun and put it on my forehead and yelled, "What are you waiting for? There is either death or this." I had no other way. I opened my mouth and he peed and I drank it. The animal left the room and the two gunmen took me back to the place where they captured me without my bicycle.

Issue No. 66

Another rocket and the torn pieces of a dead body

My two brother-in-laws were government officials who went to the city only for signing their attendance. Their route was extremely dangerous and difficult. They crossed the Dehmazang area where one side was Mazari's and the other was Rabbani's. Every day there was infighting and many rockets hit our area, so after a while we became used to them.

It was noon and I went to my husband's home. My mother-in-law was washing dishes and I asked if I could help but she resisted, saying I was tired. I heard her calling her elder son Qasim to pour water on her hands. I called from the door that I would do it for her but she said I needed to rest. She hadn't completed her sentence when a rocket hit and shook the whole yard and house. It was August 10, 1992. Dust and smoke spread everywhere and I saw one hand in one corner of the yard and a leg on the other side. I shouted at the top of my voice. Everyone came out of the rooms. My mother-in-law's body lay near the well, torn into pieces. She had no hands and her head was half hanging. Qasim rolled in blood with one leg. His head was split apart and Qasim's younger son who was watching his father from the window, laid on the floor of the room with his stomach torn apart. Everyone wept and mourned. My brother-in-laws, sister-in-laws and my husband cried loudly. All our neighbors gathered and collected the dead bodies and gave their condolences. One of them said, "Take the dead bodies to the mosque." I heard another voice, "No, these bodies cannot be taken to the mosque. Just bring something to gather all the flesh with and wrap it in something." One or two brought shawls and shrouded the bodies. The ones who had picked the dead bodies had their shirts blood-stained. The last words of my mother-in-law echoed in my ears. When my husband held the burial ceremony with his brothers and father, they told us when they returned, "We buried the dead bodies quickly because they were decaying. We prepared them and went towards the graveyard of Sakhi Shrine. We hadn't yet buried the first body when two rockets hit close to us. Everyone rushed towards the back of the shrine. A rocket hit the dead bodies and Qasim's torn pieces of flesh spread everywhere. After sometime when the air calmed down, we rushed towards Qasim's body and buried him quickly. After him buried we buried his nine-year-old son."

In the grip of Wahdatis

It was 1993, the atrocious days. I worked in my private clinic because the government couldn't afford to give my salary. One day I was sitting in my clinic when an aged woman entered with a young girl. The woman said helplessly, "My daughter was not well for some days and it has been two months since she has not had her periods. I just don't know what to do." I checked the girl, who was very scared. After checking I sent her out of the room and asked her mother if she was married. She got worried and said that she wasn't married but she was engaged. I got furious but controlled myself and said, "Your daughter is three months pregnant." She started crying and beating herself and saying, "Oh my God! What are you talking about? What will I tell her fiancé?" I said, "Marry her as soon as possible and the problem will be solved. It might be her fiancé." She suddenly started yelling, "No it is not her fiancé! Only she knows who it might be. Her poor fiancé is working in lands in Shamali and it has been six months that he hasn't come to Kabul. What do I do? Her father and brother were killed." I told her it would be a lot better if she asked her daughter who the father of the child was. But then she requested I quietly abort the child. I was very angry but then the woman started crying, "Please do it. I earn my living by washing clothes in people's homes and feed five orphans." I felt sorry for her and asked her, "Did you know about this? Is it really not her fiancé?" She burst into tears, "Yes I know him. But what can I do? He is too powerful." I replied, "No you can go to the government and report. There is an Islamic government now. They will do something about it." She murmured under her breath, "To whom do I complain and whom do I ask for help? Look doctor, you are like my daughter so I will tell you so at least you can know the pain that I am going through right now. After a rocket hit my husband I was left with my five children and I engaged my daughter and her marriage was close when her father died so we postponed the marriage. Our life was extremely hard and I fed my children by washing clothes in people's homes and my son was a hawker on road. One day my neighbor asked me to go to a place where they gave edibles at a low price. My daughter and I went to Char Aasyab and bought our groceries. We walked until we reached a place where there was no one except for us. Someone called from behind telling us to go with them in case someone shoots us from the mountains. We followed him without knowing what we were getting

into. Then we reached a ruined building and some armed men surrounded and started questioning us. I told them we had come from the city. The men were from Hezb-e-Wahdat. One of them laughed, 'Oh so now Shura-e-Nezar is sending their women. We will accept it.' I pleaded that we had nothing to do with Shura-e-Nezar and are innocent and poor people trying to get food from Char Aasyab. One of them said, 'Please stay here. Eat some food and then go.' We accepted it and they took us to a room. One of them came and asked for my daughter. I got scared and said I would not allow my daughter to go alone but then another came and slapped me hard and said, 'Sit down quietly. Your turn will also come.' They took my daughter forcefully into a room."

"After some time, I heard the cries of my daughter but couldn't help. Later, they came and took my neighbor and I again heard her yells and cries. Finally it was my turn. I resisted but they hit me severely until I lost conscious and they took me to another room. After sometime when I gained conscious two people came in the room and attacked me and started tearing off my clothes."

The woman could speak no more and I was also crying and calming her down. She started again, "We stayed there for three nights and there were six people and I don't know how many times they raped my daughter; and my neighbor and I, both of us being about the age of their mothers. On the fourth day, they threw us on the road and said laughingly, 'If you want to come again, you are most welcome.' My daughter wanted to commit suicide but I stopped her. After three days, we found out that our neighbor had committed suicide by throwing herself into the well. It has been three months. I saw my daughter's condition changing and brought her to you. Please do something about it or else we will lose our dignity. She is young and has a future. Her fiancé is waiting for her." She started crying again.

Issue No. 68

Yalda drenched in blood

Yalda was the eldest in the family and was her parents' hope and future. She was a very smart and bright girl and during the years of war she had seen many ill and wounded people and always told everyone she wanted to become a doctor

and help people. Everyone in the village loved her and always remembered her good mannerism.

On August 12, 1994 Yalda wanted to broom the street near her house so she wore a burqa and went out. After a few minutes a loud blast was heard. The street was filled with dust and smoke. Yalda's parents came out yelling and crying for her. On one side of the road laid Yalda with three other children, drenched in a pool of blood. One of the children was still alive and everyone wanted to take him to the hospital but because of the constant fighting, the roads were closed, so he also died. When the dead bodies reached the village, all the people started mourning. Everyone cried. Due to the fighting, they were forced to bury the dead bodies without any ceremonies. Yalda's father didn't talk, eat or even cry. Till now he is mentally traumatized.

Issue No. 69

Nobody was left for me

My grandchildren were trembling and shivering because of fear and the cold air. My son wanted to bring a blanket from our house. I stopped him but not for long. Seeing my grandchildren crying of cold was very hard for me. As he went out, we heard a loud blast. I didn't know what it was. I was very worried and started calling my grandchildren's names and each one replied. My daughter-in-law quickly rushed out and I followed her. As I went out, my son was lying there, torn into pieces. My world was devastated. My only hope, my only son, my beloved was martyred. My daughter-in-law was very terrified and cried and mourned loudly. The rocket burnt part of our house too.

The only two neighbors left, who were more ruined than us, held the burial ceremony of my son. Night fell and we were left without a man, shelter or food. My daughter-in-law and I cried till morning. My eyes couldn't see, my ears couldn't hear, my hands and feet did not move. There was no one to calm us down. I did not know what to do and I worried about my daughter-in-law who was still young. It wasn't dawn yet when I told my daughter-in-law to leave as soon as possible. My grandchildren did not have any warm clothes as everything was burnt. We reached the city with a lot of difficulty and we didn't know where

to go. We met one of our neighbors and she told us that the Kindergarten building (present Emergency Hospital) was empty. With the help of our neighbor we went there. Two to three families lived in every room. We took one of the empty rooms. We did not have any mattress or blankets. My daughter-in-law started crying. Everyone gathered around us and they told us their depressing stories, more depressing than ours. I found an old burqa and wore it and started begging for my daughter-in-law and my grandchildren's sake.

One day my daughter-in-law was washing some dishes that we had gathered and my grandchildren were playing around her. She was telling the children to come to me. I was also calling them. Just as we did, I heard a loud sound and went unconscious. It was almost morning when I woke up. Everyone sat around me and cried. I knew a rocket had hit my grandchildren and killed them. Pieces of their flesh were still stuck on the walls. I gathered all their flesh. I buried some at that moment and placed pieces of metal around their graves and some I took and buried beside their father's grave.

After two days, they took me to see my daughter-in-law in the hospital. Her foot was cut off. She opened her eyes and uttered something, which I did not understand. The next morning, they brought me news of her death. I buried her in the same graveyard where my son and grandchildren were buried. I wanted my death many times but I have such a tough body that even death is fed up with me.

Issue No. 71

My husband's and father-in-law's blood

Our financial state was very bad and we couldn't afford to move to someplace else, therefore we hid under our basement. But day by day the looting and killing by Gulbuddin's men and the "carpet collectors" (Dostum's men were known as "carpet collectors" because they tacked everything in carpets and stole them when they attacked an area) increased. We were absolutely tired of it so we decided to move to another place. My mother-in-law took all the heavy objects despite the problems faced with handcarts. The fighting increased and for some days we were inside the basement. Once it

calmed down, we started off again. On our way, a gunman stopped us. After constant pleading and paying a large amount of money, he let us go. We didn't go far when we saw a bunker of Shura-e-Nezar. There were three "carpet collector" gunmen who stood in front of us. They took us to the destroyed carpet shops forcibly.

After searching and questioning us they told us to go to another ruined house but my husband and father-in-law strongly resisted. They killed my father-in-law on the spot. Then they started hitting my husband. Suddenly the Shura-e-Nezar post started firing and we took the opportunity and fled. My father-in-law's dead body was lost in those ruins.

We moved to Khair Khana and stayed in a friend's house. We were getting poorer day by day. My husband was forced to go to Char Aasyab (Gulbuddin's area), where they had stopped all the provisions from entering Kabul. He was captured by Hezb-e-Wahdat of Khalili and was jailed in an area behind the Ibn-e-Sina Hospital. His mother searched desperately for her son throughout the city and finally after three days we found his dead body near Bagh-e-Bala. The Wahdatis of Khalili had shot him for being a Pashtun. We buried him and I was left with my two little sons and my old mother-in-law.

My father had moved to Logar long ago. I couldn't reach there so I decided to go to Pakistan. In Peshawar we stayed with one of my husband's friends and after a short time we were broke and we didn't have anything to eat. No one could help us so I wore a burqa and started begging. My daily income was about 20 to 30 rupees (3 cents to 5 cents). After the death of my mother-in-law I was left all alone. I wanted to marry someone but no one was ready to accept my two sons. Now I am in Kabul and working in a house.

Issue No. 75

I am embarrassed for begging but may our "leaders" burn

Hezb-e-Wahdat had taken one side of the Paghman River and Ittihad-e-Islami the other side and their bombardments hit the people's houses in between. Along with the destruction of the houses, these bombardments also

left many people killed and wounded. As a result the people started evacuating the area, but the posts of Ittihad-e-Islami stopped the people, especially a post under the command of Alafdar, who destroyed people's homes every day and took the doors and their handles and windows for sale. The people were defenseless and no one resisted them. One day my younger son, Waheedullah, didn't allow them to steal things from our house and he was killed. I had lost two of my young sons (the elder one was kidnapped in 1990 by the Jehadis and was killed in an unknown place) and life was completely meaningless for me. My wife told me that we should also die and did not want to go anywhere else. We did not have anything to eat or to burn to keep ourselves warm. Even worse was when the gunmen in the post asked for food. If anyone did not give them, they called them a Communist and committed many heinous crimes against them. We had no other way but to escape. We left everything and fled with our third son. We passed through a shower of bullets when one of them hit my wife's leg. With a lot of difficulty we reached the post of Alafdar. Instead of helping us, they started checking our pockets. After a lot of pleading they left us. As I had no money for my wife's leg, it got infected. We had lost almost everything and our life was completely shattered.

Issue No. 76

My sister in the grip of "carpet collectors"

It was almost evening and severe infighting between the Rabbanis and the "carpet collectors" was going on. There were bullets everywhere. We all were hiding in the basement when suddenly the crying of the neighbors filled the air. My father rushed out of the house and then returned telling us to remain in the basement as Zalmay, the cousin of Shukoor was killed and his dead body was on the road. In the morning three to four elders of the area picked up the dead body and were on their way when the firing of bullets and the return firing from the posts stopped them. They brought the dead body back home and buried it after two days.

The people were defenseless and had no other way of escape. Children died in front of their parents, pieces of human flesh were stuck on walls and

hung from the branches of trees, small girls and boys of six or seven years of age were torn to pieces and drenched in blood and buried directly without any shroud. These were the normal incidents that took place every day in the crying city of Kabul. The air was thick with fear and panic. Gulbuddini terrorists had killed even the Imam (the one who leads people in prayer) of the mosque and they had shown the people that fighting was not because of Islam but the hunger for power. The electrical towers were destroyed and the machines and wires stolen. Kabul had turned into a dark graveyard shrouded in fear.

It was about eight at night when yelling and crying rose and everyone was shouting, "The carpet collectors are here and they are starting a massacre." In the darkness of night people panicked and rushed here and there. The carpet collectors entered the street and started shooting, leaving many dead and wounded. The families were separated from each other. My parents and I were together when suddenly we noticed that Latifa, my sister was not with us. We searched for her till morning but did not find her. We thought she might have been killed but she was in the claws of the carpet collectors. Those immoral criminals took her to their post. She was there for three days and later she was given to a security group of Hafiz Baig, Minister of Urbanization. She was with them for two days. After that they threw her on the streets. We were thinking of holding a funeral for her but we luckily found her.

During the Taliban's time she married an electrician as a widow but it was clear that she was very bitter because of the shocking and frightening events that took place in her life.

Issue No. 77

They held my funeral

I am from Panjshir but I had lived in Kabul for many years. When the factions came to power my shop was completely destroyed. It was 1994 and I was going to my shop in Mandawi. I went in a taxi with some other men when some gunmen from Hezb-e-Wahdat stopped us and started searching us. They took me out of the car for being a Panjshiri and let the others go. I was very terrified. I was taken to a house nearby and there they started beating and torturing me without any reason

until I was unconscious. Later when I woke up I asked them the reason for bringing me there and begged them to let me go as my family was waiting for me. They laughed, "We need you. You are our prey." And then they started abusing me badly. They gave me a shot and again made me unconscious. When I was conscious again, I noticed I was in some other place. They had converted the store of a Hindu trader into a prison. There were about 400 prisoners there; some from Shura-e-Nezar, some disobedient people from their own faction and some innocent people like me.

They hanged some people in front of our eyes to tell us not to do anything wrong. The days passed and we had no news from outside. We only heard gunshots. I was extremely withdrawn and thought about my family. After sometime, we were taken somewhere to dig trenches. We were divided into groups and it was a very hard job. If we showed even slight laziness we were punished and not given any food.

One day we were ordered to leave one room for another one without any windows. After that I got to know that they were building a prison. We were then taken to the first place and again we had to work hard. The infighting between Hezb-e-Wahdat and Harakat-e-Islami started and all the prisoners were surrounded between them. There was no way to escape. No one thought they would remain alive. There were many killed and wounded. Hezb-e-Wahdat had taken 160 captives from Harakat-e-Islami and brought them to our place. All of the prisoners were very terrified and thought they would be killed that night. One day Hezb-e-Wahdat came and took their 160 captives along with ten captives from Shura-e-Nezar. All of us were extremely frightened and lost hope of remaining alive. I asked one of my fellow prisoners, "What is going on?" He replied, "There is a new group which has arrived in Kabul called Taliban. We have been united with them." There were only three security guards remaining and every time they came, they threatened to kill us. We pleaded and one of them said, "There is one way. We can break the prison door and we will escape. If anyone asks you about us, tell them we are captives of Hezb-e-Wahdat". We did so and as we reached Char Aasyab, which was the Taliban's area at that time, each one of us parted. I was in an extremely bad condition and easily resembled a mad person.

I talked to a taxi driver and he agreed to take me to my home. I felt strange as I entered our street. When I reached our house, I walked with my naked feet and

embarrassed, knocked on the door. My nephew opened the door and yelled. Everyone ran. My old mother rushed to me and embraced me excitedly and happily. She couldn't believe I was alive and told me they had held my funeral. The taxi driver was also crying and left without taking any money. It was a very happy moment for every one of us.

Issue No. 79

The killing of my mother

I do not know how the people of Kabul remained alive during the four, dark years from 1992 till 1996. Till eight years of age, all I experienced was fear, destruction, hunger, loneliness and poverty.

When the Mujahideen came, my parents were very happy, thinking our country was free. Whenever I think about that freedom, I get shivers. The war started in Kabul. We lived in Dehmazang and as the situation got worse we decided to move to our uncle's home. My mother slowly packed the items of the only room in which we all lived. My father was a teacher but had a pushcart. Months passed and we did not eat any meat, fruit or vegetables. My father did not eat anything. He said by seeing the bad situation and horrible scenes in the city, he couldn't eat anything.

Whenever my mother went out of the room, we followed her but one time she did not allow us. She went to fetch water from the well. I was watching her from the window and as she noticed me, she scolded me to go inside. As she pulled out the bucket of the well to pour water in the other bucket, I heard a loud blast. I turned and saw that my mother wasn't there. At first I thought she had gone inside but when I went out and called her name, I noticed my mother's sandal torn apart. As I proceeded, I noticed my mother's beheaded, bloodstained and burnt body. I cried and rushed inside. I thought I saw my mother. I still did not know or believe what had happened. I was traumatized and couldn't move. I heard someone knocking on the door. I knew it was father but couldn't go. Finally my father jumped from the wall. At first he thought we all were killed but when he saw me in the room, he started crying loudly. At that moment I knew my mother was dead. As my neighbors talked, I discovered that

my mother was torn into pieces and bits of her flesh hung on the trees and stuck on the walls.

Till today I burn in grief when I think about my mother. I am an adult now. I think that my siblings are luckier than me because they did not see mother at that moment. The only reason I am alive is the four children who think of me as their sister, mother and guardian.

Issue No. 81

3

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

Blood-Stained Hands

Reports of a single year in Afghanistan's history:
April 1992 to March 1993

S.K., a health worker in a hospital in west Kabul, described the horror of everyday life after fighting started in Kohte Sangi, a neighborhood in the west, "What can I say? What I saw in those days I can never forget. Hundreds of people were wounded when they fought — every time they fought. The hospital would be full of patients, overwhelmed; we couldn't treat everyone who was brought there. People were dying in the halls. People would not get treatment. There were dead bodies everywhere, and blood. When the fighting was very bad, and we couldn't transport anyone anywhere, there would be dead bodies in the hospital for weeks at a time... Whenever the journalists came, they would ask the same questions: "How many rockets hit? How many were killed? How many were injured?" That's all they were interested in... I saw dead bodies in the streets, and everywhere, all around west Kabul. In the hospital there were so many dead bodies, and because of the fighting, people could not come to take away the bodies."

S.K. said that hospitals in west Kabul were repeatedly hit during the fighting between Ittihad/Jamiat and Wahdat. "One time, the children's ward at the hospital was hit, and twice the operating theatre. Patients were killed, and staff."

A Kabul resident told Human Rights Watch about terrible scenes he encountered in west Kabul early in the summer of 1992, "My wife was delivering our first child. Because I was poor, we were in our home, we could not leave to go anywhere [i.e. to a hospital]. So my wife told me to bring her sister, to help. So I went to west Kabul, to Qargha [on the border of Paghman district], to get her... [T]he fighting had started while I was there. So we took the road up through Afshar. So we were going on the road, my sister-in-law on the bicycle behind me. From Qargha to Afshar, on the road, I saw many corpses — seventeen, eighteen, I don't know — all civilians. They were commuters, people riding on the road [i.e., on bicycles], not fighters. Their bodies were swollen up. Also, I saw combatants, Hazaras, tied to trees, shot dead. I saw four fighters like this. My sister-in-law, of course, was very upset, and she started vomiting, so I had to stop. She was vomiting, and could not go on. Till this day, she does not eat meat... So we turned back. We went back to

Qargha, and then we went on another road... When I got to my home, my wife had delivered my first child, and my first child was dead. To bury him was very difficult, with so much fighting going on, it was very difficult."

An Afghan journalist who worked regularly in west Kabul through 1992 described how the fighting typically took place, "They were constantly shelling the civilian areas of west Kabul, and Afshar... Shura-e-Nezar would sometimes attack them from the zoo, and the silo [a grain warehouse in west Kabul]. Sayyaf's forces would attack from the west: Dasht-e-Barchi [to the southwest] and Kohte Sangi [central west Kabul]. West Kabul was destroyed by the fighting between Ittihad and Wahdat, and by the artillery and rockets fired by Shura-e-Nezar off of Television Mountain and Mamorine [the two peaks in the center of Kabul city]... I went to a lot of places where the rockets and shells would fall. I saw many bodies, terrible sights."

Sharon Herbaugh, a correspondent with Associated Press who died in a helicopter crash north of Kabul in 1993, filed a dispatch on June 5:

[Friday, June 5, 1992] -- [A]ttacks continued, and more shops, schools and homes were destroyed in the ravaged capital. At least 20 more people were killed and 100 others injured... Rival forces pounded each other with rockets and mortars, destroying entire blocks of shops and houses, and knocking down power lines. In downtown Kabul, rockets slammed into three empty schools, killing four passers-by and setting fires. Missiles also fell on a house in northern Kabul, killing a family of six, witnesses said. Unidentified gunmen raked a row of shops near the Kabul zoo, killing or injuring 10 people, witnesses said... Residents in predominantly Shiite neighborhoods also accused Sunni rebels of looting shops and houses, killing prisoners, gouging out the eyes of wounded guerrillas and burning dead bodies.

A journalist from Agence France-Presse saw hundreds of civilians fleeing from the west the same week, and witnessed some being shot by random gunfire and wounded children being carted to hospitals in wheelbarrows.

One civilian who lived near the large grain silo in west Kabul described

fighting between Wahdat and Ittihad that he believes took place in June 1992, right after a brief ceasefire, "People were really hoping [the ceasefire] would last: they were moving about, doing things that they hadn't been able to do until then... It was around nine o' clock in the morning. Suddenly, there was an explosion and a lot of firing of weapons. Everything was bullets, it was very severe. Everyone was rushing to flee from the violence. Husbands forgot wives, brothers forgot sisters, mothers forgot children, uncles forgot nephews — everyone was running away, and could only think of safety... People were fleeing into our neighborhood because it was controlled by Shura-e-Nezar. Wahdat was attacking from the south side of Kohte Sangi [a traffic roundabout south of the silo], and Sayyaf's forces were in Khushal Khan [to the west of the silo]. Both sides wanted to seize the property in that area: they wanted to use the places there to establish military positions. Both sides marched into the civilian areas and took up positions in people's houses. They were shooting at each other with rockets, guns, all sorts of weapons. My house was where Shura-e-Nezar had a checkpoint. I could see the women and men rushing away from the fighting, running down the street towards us. At the same time, some of the bullets, or shrapnel from the explosions, was hitting people. So men and women were falling down into the street. They would be running, and then the bullets would hit them, and they would fall down. The other people just kept running, and were not bothering to save those who fell. They were all rushing to save themselves. It was a terrible day... They were shooting everywhere. Everything was being hit: civilians, anything. Sayyaf's forces were shooting off their guns and rockets, they were flying into the side of Mamorine mountain [behind the silo], where there are houses and where the civilians were fleeing to, behind the silo. Rockets were going everywhere. The fighting lasted until dark. Sayyaf's troops came up into our neighborhood. We could see the Kandahari people [Pashtuns from Kandahar city] among Sayyaf's troops."

A journalist in Kabul documented severe attacks on Hazara households by Ittihad troops on the night of June 4, 1992, interviewing residents who reported that Ittihad troops had attacked and looted homes in Kohte Sangi, and killed six civilians. "The guerrillas were going from house to house, saying they wanted to kill all the Shias," one frightened resident told the journalist.

Fighting continued through the month and into the summer. Jamhuriat

hospital, near the Interior Ministry, had all its windows blown out and closed around June 24. Journalists who visited the hospital later in the week saw "a scene of utter despair" — no doctors or nurses, surgery patients lying in their own excrement and urine. Conditions were such that anyone in Kabul could be killed at any time, almost anywhere: rockets and shells would hit homes, offices, bus stations, schools, or markets.

Kabul residents were often able to tell Human Rights Watch about rocket and artillery attacks they say they knew were launched by Hekmatyar's forces, since they could often see rockets streaking in from the southwest, from areas under Hizb-e-Islami control, or hear artillery being fired from the same area.

One resident described to Human Rights Watch a rocket attack in the summer of 1992, "Hekmatyar would rocket civilian areas all the time. One time, in the summer of 1992, I was standing behind the ministry of education, in Deh Afghanan. I was waiting for a bus. A poor old man had a little cart and was selling chocolate and peanuts and almonds. The bus came, and it moved past me, so I moved down the block to get on the bus. I was getting on the bus, and suddenly, a rocket hit, where I had been. That man disappeared completely. No one found even one piece of his flesh. He completely disappeared. I think that 20 other people died there, and many more were wounded."

A woman in west Kabul described indiscriminate shelling in the west of Kabul in June 1992. She believes the attacks were by Hekmatyar's forces south of Kabul, since she heard artillery firing to the south during the attack, "It was about 4 p.m., and I was baking some bread outside, over a fire. Suddenly, there was a big explosion. I took cover, on the ground. Then, there was another explosion. I got up and I could see this woman here [pointing to a neighbor who is crying], and she was just running about. [The women asked her neighbor to tell her story for her, and nodded throughout.] Her son had been sitting near this wall outside, where the artillery landed, and he was completely blown up. This woman here was running about, collecting pieces of [his] flesh in her apron, and crying. Her son's name was Sakhi. He was completely blown up, disappeared. Her grandson, Mukhtar, was also killed in the same explosion."

A middle-aged man described a rocket attack that occurred around the same time, when Hekmatyar was firing rockets and artillery regularly into the city, "We were in Microrian 3 [in the east of the city, controlled by Jamiat and Junbish forces], it was about three o' lock in the afternoon. I was near this man's house, Alaz. We were in his yard, by a tree. He had some tomato plants, there were some good tomatoes, and I was asking him how much they cost. Suddenly there was a missile, and it hit the land, about 40 meters away. I dove to the ground. After a minute, I saw Alaz. He was bleeding. He was still alive. I asked him, I said, "Let's go to the hospital!" But he said: "No, there's no time. I am about to die." I held him, and then I carried him — he was bleeding from the side, the left side. My clothes were soaked with blood. The family came and gathered, they were screaming and crying. After about ten minutes, he died. This was in Block 19, in Microrian."

A journalist working in Kabul recounted seeing the terrible effects of the attacks in Kabul hospitals at the time, hospitals filled after the city came under fire from the south, "I remember pretty terrible scenes from those days, from the hospital. I saw children, kids, women wounded. Kids with their legs blown off. I once saw some kids arriving at the hospital in a car; their legs had been blown off by a bomb and they were just lying in the boot of the car. They were shelling into the city. It was Hekmatyar's forces."

The chief of the United Nations mission in Kabul told journalists on August 20: It's a terrible situation. The government no longer controls anything; there is no longer law and order.

The streets are entirely deserted, except for armed soldiers. Water and electric power have been cut off for nearly a week and my colleagues from WHO [the World Health Organization] are afraid of an outbreak of epidemics.

The United Nations estimated that approximately 500,000 persons fled Kabul by the end of the summer for safer areas inside and outside of Afghanistan, primarily because of Hekmatyar's rocket and artillery attacks. With respect to Wahdat, Ittihad, and Jamiat hostilities in west Kabul, there is compelling evidence that factions regularly and intentionally targeted civilians and civilian areas for attack, and recklesslessly and indiscriminately fired weapons into civilian areas.

One Afghan journalist, quoted above, told Human Rights Watch that he witnessed on several occasions Ittihad and Wahdat forces intentionally firing rockets into occupied civilian homes during hostilities in 1992.

"There was little effort [by any of the factions] to aim at targets," an international journalist told Human Rights Watch, describing the fighting between Wahdat, Ittihad, and Jamiat. "It was Massoud and Sayyaf versus the Hazaras. Deh Mazang [an area in west Kabul] was a front line. They would shoot at anything in between, whatever it was."

S.K., a hospital worker quoted above, also told Human Rights Watch about the attacks on civilians by Jamiat forces stationed on Television Mountain in the center of Kabul, "There was a time when the Jamiat troops on TV Mountain would target anything on Alaudin Street [the main road running north-south through Karte Seh].

They would target anything that moved, even a cat... I remember [one time] I went out to go to this clinic [to obtain medical equipment], and as soon as they saw me on that mountain they were shooting.

Anything that looked like a human being would be targeted. They shot everything: rockets, shells, bullets. There were times when the streets were littered with bullets... "

A former high-level official in Shura-e-Nezar confirmed that Jamiat troops on the Mamorine mountain (the western peak next to Television Mountain and above west Kabul) regularly launched rockets and artillery into the civilian areas of west Kabul in 1992 and 1993.

A photojournalist who worked in Kabul regularly during 1992, and visited numerous military posts, told Human Rights Watch about Jamiat forces firing into civilian areas from the same mountain, "Yeah, they'd fire off T.V. Mountain all the time. Some of the wackos up there, they'd get bored. They'd strafe the neighborhoods below with anti-aircraft fire. For fun — just for the hell of it. The civilian homes below, near the zoo, by the traffic check-post, near the silo. They wouldn't aim at any ministries [government buildings], that'd be their own turf. No, they'd fire toward the southwest, and not just at Wahdat but at civilians.

And there were Tajiks down there too [same ethnicity as Jamiat], not just Shias [Hazaras are predominately Shia]."

Wahdat, Ittihad, and Jamiat forces regularly used imprecise weapons systems. Many commanders and troops were trained by Pakistani, American, and British experts on the use of rocket and artillery systems.

Marc Biot, a medical official at the Jamuhuriat hospital, told Human Rights Watch: It was like this: At any moment a missile could fall... When you were outside, you never knew if a missile would fall on your head. They were shooting them blindly, anywhere: into roads, markets, houses... The most awful thing was that any bomb could fall on any place at any time. There was a clear political will to shell the city, as a city — to shell the city as a civilian place. The shelling was ubiquitous, everywhere.

According to the Afghan Justice Project, an independent non-governmental group that has investigated military operations in Afghanistan from 1979 through 2001, besides Hekmatyar the following commanders had operation control over the military posts firing artillery and rockets at Kabul during the period discussed in this report:

Commander Toran Khalil, chief artillery officer in Hizb-e-Islami who supervised shelling and rocketing operations during late 1992 into 1993, commander of a base at an oil depot at the south of Charasyab, south of Kabul.

Toran Amanullah, commander of the Firqa Sama, stationed at the Rishkor military base, south of Kabul.

Commander Zardad, commander of a military post at the Lycee Shorwaki.

Engineer Zulmai, of the Lashkar Issar, commander of a post at the Kotal Hindki pass to the south of Chilsatoon, south of Kabul, near the Rishkor base.

Nur Rahman Panjshiri, commander of a post in the village of Shahak, to the southeast of Kabul, directly controlled by the Sama division.

General Wali Shah, an officer in the Najibullah government who joined Hizb-e-Islami in 1992, commander of a base at Sang-e-Nevishta, Logar, south of Kabul.

Shura Nizami (military council) commanders Faiz Mohammad, Kashmir Khan, and Sabawon.

Abductions, "Disappearances," Torture and Other Mistreatment of Detainees

Ittihad and Wahdat forces were increasingly abducting civilians and holding them for ransom or exchange — Ittihad holding Hazaras, and Wahdat holding Pashtuns, Tajiks, and other non-Hazaras.

A journalist told Human Rights Watch: There was a lot of kidnapping in the west. The commanders under Sayyaf and the commanders under Hizb-e-Wahdat would stop buses or cars, and look for Hazaras and Pashtuns. Sayyaf's men would look for Hazaras. Hizb-e-Wahdat forces would look for Pashtuns.

Hazaras abducted Pashtuns and Pashtuns abducted Hazaras wherever they saw each other. They pulled out the fingernails of prisoners, cut off hands, cut off legs, even hammered nails into prisoners' skulls. Humans were kept in [shipping] containers and containers were set on fire...

Many of the civilians abducted by the two sides during this time were never seen again.

Abductions by Wahdat

A young Tajik man from west Kabul, told Human Rights Watch, "[M]y brother came and said he wanted us to leave the area with him. We were talking about this, sitting in our home, drinking tea, when some gunmen [Wahdat] came and knocked on the door. "Whose house is this?" a commander said. He was at the door. — "It is mine," I said. — What is your name?" I said my name was [deleted]. — "Where are you from?" he asked. — "Kabul," I said. — "You're lying," he said. He pulled out a list, and found my name on the list: my parents and

brothers names were on the list also, and next to my name it said we were from Shamali [a predominately Tajik area north of Kabul]. The commander said, "Are you from Shamali?" And I said yes, that I was studying in Kabul and lived there. He said, "Let's go inside," and pushed me into my own house. As I came in, I told my brother [with my hands] to hide himself, but he didn't understand. So then the commander saw him also... Before taking us away, they arrested a guy from Wardak next door. He was complaining a lot, so they blindfolded him... They put us all in a vehicle, and when we got to Kohte Sangi they put blindfolds on us too. After that, we couldn't see and could not understand where they were taking us... When the vehicle stopped, the men assumed they were at Dasht-e-Barchi, where Wahdat had a base, but the man later discovered he was at Onchi aghbanan [to the north of Dasht-e-Barchi, about 4 kilometers west of Karte Seh]. We got out. They threw the three of us into a container ... Then, a commander with two bodyguards came, and he came into the container, and questioned us. "You both are some guys from Shamali and you are helping Massoud!" he said. — I said, "I am a medical student; neither I nor my brother are soldiers. We are from Shamali, but we are not soldiers." — "Keep quiet," he said. And then the guards cocked their Kalashnikovs [assault rifles]. The commander signaled to his troops to take us away. We were blindfolded, and made to walk somewhere else. They were kicking us. Finally, we were imprisoned in a small room.

The man said he and the other prisoners were later given a plate of rice to share. But that night, other prisoners were brought in and together they were transported to another site, "We drove there. Then they threw us into a basement — no, the basement of a basement. It was dark, and dirty, and very cold. We could hear machine guns were being fired above us. We assumed that we were somewhere near the front line. That night, they brought three other guys: a guy from Jalalabad, a worker from Shamali, and a lecturer from the university. They were also thrown into the basement with us. There was not enough room for us. There was dirty air, and it was completely, completely dark. We were there for several days. They would let us out two times a day, to urinate.

The basement room was freezing, and the young man said at times he was so numb that he feared he was going to die. After a week, the man and his brother were released, apparently because of the intervention of relatives

who were able to make contacts with Wahdat commanders. But the man said his fellow prisoners met a different fate, "Those other people who we were imprisoned with were never released. They disappeared. I know because they told us to find their families. And I contacted their families, several times. Those families pressured us, to help them. We gave them some advice. But a month later those prisoners were not released. And later on, when I spoke with them again, I learned that those prisoners had never been released."

An elderly Pashtun man described being arrested by Wahdat forces in mid-May 1992, and seeing other prisoners killed by them, "It was morning, I was going by Chelsitoon garden. I was with my 10- year-old son. We were stopped by Hizb-e-Wahdat troops. Two men. They took us to Habibi high school. They didn't give me any problems at first, they were just questioning me... But I saw this container nearby, with prisoners. The two men were arguing. One was saying, "Leave him, he's innocent." The other was saying, "No, we should arrest them because they're Pashtuns." They had arrested some other Pashtuns, and I saw them putting them into a container there. The first one was saying, "Put him in the container!" And the other was saying, "No, he has a young kid with him." Then the first one was saying, "No — he is Pashtun. Put him in the container!" Their argument lasted a few minutes. Finally, they let me go and I was set free. The man said the troops sometime soon after apparently fired a missile or rocket propelled grenade into the container: I was walking away with my son. We heard the explosion. The container had been closed after they put the prisoners in it. I heard the explosion and I looked, and then I took my son and started to move away, because we were in danger... When I looked I saw that all these people were running away from where the container was... I heard screams from the container and there was smoke coming out of the hole. The rocket had penetrated and exploded...

A senior civilian official in the Jamiat-dominated government told Human Rights Watch that numerous complaints were made to the government about Wahdat arrests, and that they documented that Wahdat had set up a prison at a compound in west Kabul called Qala Khana, run by a

senior Wahdat commander called Shafi Diwana (Shafi the Mad), in which prisoners were tortured and killed. Petitioners brought allegations to the Jamiat officials that Wahdat forces were burning the bodies of prisoners in brick-making furnaces in the compound.

Abductions by Ittihad

Human Rights Watch interviewed a Pashtun man who, despite his Pashtun ethnicity, was held by Ittihad forces in the summer of 1992 because of a non-ethnic dispute with troops, "[S]ome of Sayyaf's men, from Paghman, came and took me. They were looking for my brother-in-law [because of a private financial dispute], but they took me instead, as a hostage. They took me to Khoshal Khan Mina, the headquarters for the electric buses, near the silos. They put me in a room there, and they told me that they would hold me there, for a night, and then I would be released."

The commander there was named Tourgal. But the next day, Wahdat and Sayyaf started fighting. That night, as fighting raged outside, the man said that the Ittihad forces brought in Hazara civilians, "Sayyaf's forces brought thirty or forty Hazara civilians... They were not fighters, but civilians, old and young." Later in the night, according to the man, the Ittihad forces shot at the prisoners in their holding cell with an automatic weapon, "[T]he fighting got severe. We could hear the artillery. There was a lot of shooting. I could hear these people, Sayyaf's people, talking about retreating. And at one point, one of them said to Commander Tourgal, "What should we do with these prisoners?" They were speaking in Pashto, and the Hazara people couldn't understand them. But I could understand. Somebody said, "Go and shoot them." I was near the door. When I heard this, I hurried away and hid away from the door, in the corner of the room [on the side of the room with the door]. A person came, and opened the door, and shot all over the room with his Kalashnikov, on automatic. He just fired randomly all over the room. About ten people were killed, immediately, and four were wounded... After, no one moved. We [who were still alive] were trembling with fear. The fighting outside was serious — the commander called on this guy

to come back to fight at the windows with them, so the man left, to go back to fighting."

Abuse of Prisoners

Human Rights Watch received consistent and credible testimony that many of the persons detained by Wahdat and Ittihad were forced to work, mistreated, or tortured while in the custody of Ittihad and Wahdat forces.

S.K., a hospital worker quoted above, described seeing detainees after their release from both factions who were badly injured, who told her they had been subjected to torture and other mistreatment: I saw hostages who had been tortured: civilians and non-civilians. This was something common: people released by each side, their families would bring them to the hospital [because they had been abused in captivity]. Wahdat would capture Pashtuns and Tajiks, and Ittihad would capture Hazaras. I saw what they had done to them: People beaten up. People who had been tortured. They had put RPGs [Rocket Propelled Grenades] into the anus. They gang-raped girls. I saw these victims.

"Disappearances"

In 1996, Afghan aid workers working in west Kabul published a book documenting some of the abductions and "disappearances" of persons from west Kabul, with names and pictures (when available) of victims. H.K., one of the books' researchers, told Human Rights Watch that over 1,000 people were reported missing in west Kabul in the first year after the fall of the Najibullah government.

H.K. said that most of those who were released were tortured by their captors and exhibited physical signs of it. He told the story of one man he worked to have released, from Ittihad's forces, who said he had been forced to work "as a slave" on a commander's farm in Paghman.

R.D., a former official in the interim government who was familiar with ongoing criminality by various factions, said that Anwar Dangar, a high-level commander in Shura-e-Nezar, was "deeply involved in kidnapping schemes," and that another Jamiat commander, Qasim Jangal Bagh, was regularly implicated in abduction, or hostage-taking, for ransom.

Former Jamiat and Junbish officials confirmed to Human Rights Watch that Junbish forces regularly engaged in killings of prisoners in 1992 and 1993.

Pillage and Looting

Human Rights Watch interviewed scores of journalists, health workers, aid workers, taxi drivers, civil servants, and soldiers who witnessed widespread pillage and looting by Jamiat, Junbish, Wahdat, Ittihad, Harakat, and Hizb-e-Islami forces after the Najibullah government fell.

An Afghan journalist described what he saw in April 1992, "I saw with my own eyes Sayyaf's troops and Massoud's troops looting as they entered the city, breaking windows, stealing whatever they wanted. They were acting like animals, doing whatever they wanted."

A BBC journalist described to Human Rights Watch looting he saw in May 1992, "I saw General Dostum's Uzbek troops looting... It was easy to recognize them. I knew who they were from their clothes and features.

They were totally recognizable. I saw some of them carrying refrigerators on their backs, and other things like that, air conditioners. I remember especially some guys, Dostum's Uzbeks, coming out of a compound somewhere. These were happy and contented guys, smiling.

They had some refrigerators and other appliances like that, carrying them on their backs. And I saw these smiling guys put the goods in their trucks and drive away. The Presidential Palace was looted by government troops [Jamiat and Junbish].

The troops went in, and were taking out carpets and things like that."

A former official in Shura-e-Nezar told Human Rights Watch about looting by Jamiat troops working for Kasim Jangal Bagh, a mid-level Jamiat commander, "Qasim Jangal Bagh's troops were responsible for the trouble that went on in [Microrian and Wazir Akbar Khan — two neighborhoods in eastern Kabul]: looting, kidnapping, and raping of girls... Qasim had a Ghund [military post] — it was independent I think. Bismillah Khan [a Shura-e-Nezar commander] was his operational commander, but he may have reported directly to Massoud... Massoud was giving him money [to pay his troops], but he was taking it for himself. I know—I know how these things work even now. He had cars, houses, but his gunmen were poor. So they were taking whatever they wanted from people."

A photojournalist who worked in Kabul through 1992 described seeing blocks of houses in west Kabul that were looted by Jamiat forces, "You'd notice blocks getting hit. Roof beams were torn out of the houses, electricity wires torn out, appliances, all the possessions."

A journalist with the British Broadcasting Corporation told Human Rights Watch about Junbish forces targeting civilians in April of 1992, "Junbish had been looting... We filmed Junbish troops beating up this guy who had a bicycle. I guess they wanted to take the bicycle. I think that this was one of those rare cases where the presence of a camera literally stopped someone from being killed. They were clubbing him with Kalashnikovs, but when one of the troops saw us and pointed at us, they sent the guy on his way. In another case, near the Intercontinental [Hotel], the camera led to problems. These Uzbek troops [Junbish] saw us, and they were acting up for the camera. They had this guy, this civilian, and they wanted to show off. They were making him stand a few meters away and they were shooting at his feet with their Kalashnikovs, making him dance. They were yelling, "Dance! Dance!" and shooting at his feet."

A Junbish official detailed some of the specific commanders involved in abuses, "Shir Arab, Ismail Diwaneh ["Ismail the Mad"], and Abdul Cherik from the beginning engaged in widespread looting of the market. Killing took place only over looting. In late 1371, early 1372 [January to May 1993], they looted the Porzaforooshi Bazaar... Ismail Diwaneh was in Bala Hissar [on the southeast

edge of Kabul]. He regularly killed and robbed Pashtuns from Paktia who were passing through on the way to Kabul."

Another former Shura-e-Nezar official, discussing general looting by Jamiat forces in 1992 and 1993, described a particularly bad commander, Rahim "Kung Fu," who the official said was "a robber and killer and a thief, in a word, a criminal." The official (who began crying as he was interviewed about Rahim) also told Human Rights Watch that Rahim was involved in killings of Hazara civilians, and children, during an operation against Wahdat forces posted in Taimani neighborhood in 1992, "There were many rapes, the killing of many women and men. He was killing so many Hazaras. He killed children. I'm sorry, I cannot talk about it anymore."

In a later interview, he described how he heard Rahim boast about crimes committed during the Taimani operation, "He said he *pochaghed* Hazara [slaughtered, or cut their throats]. "We killed 300, 350 people," he said. "I went to a house. I saw an infant. I put the bayonet in its mouth. It sucked on it like a tit, then I pushed it through."

One Kabul resident-a civil society organizer who often acted as a mediator between factions-told Human Rights Watch about an incident he witnessed in December 1992 when he said Junbish troops executed a Tajik man who had come to pay a ransom to release his brother, who he said was being held by a Junbish commander, Abdul Cherik, "One day [a woman came to me] asking for a favor. [I] had a few connections with some people in Junbish, she was asking me to help her: her brother's car had been seized by some Junbish forces in December 1992. The car had been seized by Abdul Cherik — a commander with a checkpoint near the Kabul City Electrical Station (in east Kabul) in Chaman Waziri. I went to his checkpoint. While I was sitting there, waiting to talk to him [Cherik], a young guy, about 18 or 19, entered with a bag full of money. It was a Panjshiri guy — I could tell because of his accent, and he looked Tajik.

He asked Abdul Cherik to release his brother. He said: "This is the ransom you have asked for, for my brother," and he opened up the bag. It was full of money. I don't know how much.

Abdul Cherik looked at him, and then looked at his guards, and said, "Take

him to his brother." And his guards motioned him to come, and they took his arm, and went out the back door. So they went out. I was waiting in that room. About three minutes later, I heard the sound of gunshots, about fifty meters away. It was a burst of automatic gunfire. And then a little later, the gunmen came back in. They had some rings and a watch in their hands, and they gave Abdul Cherik the rings and watch, on his desk. I had gone to that place to try to convince this commander to release this guy's car, but after this happened, I immediately left the compound and walked away. I got outside and said to myself, "God save me," and left there. I asked this guard near the door to the compound, "Did you kill him, or just take his rings and watch?" The Junbish guy said, "What a question! Can a Panjshiri remain alive when he is imprisoned by us or is in our control?" It was unimaginable to me that they would kill someone like that. It was something ordinary for them. You couldn't believe that they had killed him. It was like nothing had happened. The gunmen who were in the room there while I was waiting, they showed no reaction when those other men returned. It was an ordinary thing for them."

"I had [a store] in front of my house. I was selling some things there, one morning, sitting there. I saw this younger guy walk by — he had recently been married. Then I heard some shooting down the street. I looked down the street, and I saw that the guy who had passed was on the ground, and this other guy was over him — he held a pistol up to his head and shot him in the temple. The guy was dead. Some other people on the street walked a little forward [i.e., toward the body, to look], and then stopped."

A Kabul resident, a bus driver, told Human Rights Watch about being arrested, having his bus stolen, and almost being executed by Hizb-e-Islami forces, in late 1992, "One time, I was driving, and I had got to the end of my route, all the [passengers] had gotten off and the bus was empty... A man and a teenager asked me to stop, and I slowed down, to give them a ride. Suddenly, armed men surrounded the truck, and got in, and ordered me to turn around, and when I hesitated, they beat me. So I turned around, and they made me go on a small road, toward Gardez... They took me to this check post there — they were Hekmatyar's people. They made me show them how to use the car, the

gears, and how to start it. Then the commander said, "Take him to the mountain, and shoot him." And they started to lead me away. On the path [up the mountain], an old man saw me, and said, "What's the matter?" And I asked him to help me if he could. The troops pushed me forward. The old man went down to the commander [behind me] and told him not to kill me. [As an elder, the man presumably had additional influence.] The commander called up to the troops, "Just beat him." And that's what they did. They beat me very severely, and I lost consciousness. When I woke up, they had taken my watch, and I was alone. I went down the mountain on the other side, and got a cart to stop and take me into the city. I got a rickshaw driver to take me to my house, but I fainted on the way, and my family had to carry me into my house... "

There is compelling evidence presented above that Ittihad and Wahdat forces abducted thousands of persons in the first year of the post-Najibullah era, as well as more in later years. The fact that so many persons arrested were never again seen by their families suggests that both the Ittihad and Wahdat factions killed thousands of these detainees. There is also compelling evidence that detainees who survived their detention were tortured or otherwise mistreated. The widespread murders, arbitrary deprivations of liberty, torture and other mistreatment committed by Ittihad and Wahdat forces may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Sayyaf, as the leader of Ittihad, is centrally implicated in the abuses described above, since he exercised ultimate control of Ittihad forces. Officials in the Rabbani government in 1992-1993, allied with Sayyaf, acknowledged to Human Rights Watch that Sayyaf, as the senior military commander of Ittihad forces, was in regular contact with his commanders, and that he had the power to release prisoners held by his subordinates, and in fact ordered such releases on several occasions, demonstrating his command over those commanders.

And in June 1992, when interviewed by a journalist in Kabul about the abductions, Sayyaf did not deny that Ittihad forces were abducting Hazara civilians, but merely accused Wahdat of being an agent of the Iranian government.

Investigations will need to focus in particular on the role of Ittihad commanders Shir Alam, Mullah Izzat, Zalmay Toofan, Abdul Manan, Dr. Abdullah, and Noor Aqa, who were named by several sources in this report as being implicated in abductions and holding of prisoners for forced labor.

As for Wahdat, its leader, Mazari, who was killed in 1995, was implicated in the abuses above. Mazari and his deputy, Karim Khalili (now the vice-president of Afghanistan), acknowledged taking Pashtun civilians as prisoners in interviews with Reuters and Associated Press. (Andrew Roche, "Kabul fighting erupts again despite ceasefire," Reuters, June 4, 1992; Sharon Herbaugh, "Civilians tell of captivity, torture by rebels," Associated Press, June 6, 1992.

Shafi Diwana and Nasir Diwana have been killed, but Wahid Turkmani, Mohsin Sultani, Tahir Toofan, Sedaqat Jahori, and Commander Bahrami are believed to be still alive, and should also be investigated for their role in the Wahdat abuses documented here.

Rape and Sexual Violence

Several health workers in Kabul who spoke with Human Rights Watch stated that rape and other forms of sexual violence were commonly committed against women who were abducted by Wahdat and Ittihad forces in 1992-1993, as well as generally during the hostilities around Kabul at the time.

H.K., who worked on a documentation project into abductions discussed earlier in this report, told Human Rights Watch that researchers working on this issue in the early 1990's knew of widespread abductions and rape of women in west Kabul, although he said that families were in most cases unwilling to give information about details.

Human Rights Watch did receive accounts from several journalists and civil society organizers about cases of rape which they documented — specifically, cases of troops from Jamiat, Hizb-e-Islami, and Wahdat breaking into houses and raping women. Human Rights Watch also received credible

information from government sources about cases of rape by Jamiat, Wahdat, and Junbish forces.

S.K., the health worker in west Kabul quoted earlier, said she treated numerous women who said they had been raped by militia forces in west Kabul in 1992-1993, and collected bodies of women in the streets who showed signs of having been raped. S.K. described a typical case of a woman she found on the street in Karte She, in west Kabul, "A Pashtun; she had some tattoos on her face.She had been killed, and she had been tortured, you could see, and raped.We picked her up and took her to the hospital... "

January – February 1993: Conflict Continues

A journalist recalled the general level of chaos at the time, and driving from the city center to west Kabul to see the fighting, "It was complete madness. No one was on the roads. On the main road [running to Darul Aman in west Kabul] there were rockets coming in all around. It was terrifying really. It wasn't really possible to tell where they were coming from. When you went down to Charasyab [southwest of Kabul] you'd see rocket launchers, where Hekmatyar's troops were. And on that mountain behind Wazir [Bibi Mahro hill] also... There were attacks all the time. It was completely arbitrary whether you could get to the places that had been hit quickly enough to cover it [interview people and file stories]. We saw terrible things. Dead people, wounded people, corpses on the side of the road. One time we saw the remains of a child, lying on the ground. One time we picked up a guy who had been wounded, a civilian, with a huge hole in his side. It was horrible really. We had to put him in the boot of the car and we drove him to the hospital. It was quite absurd. I don't think that he lived."

There is no accurate tally of dead and wounded civilians during the fighting, but journalists in Kabul at the time were able to gather limited reports day-to-day:

On January 19, a health official reported to Agence France-Presse that 33 wounded persons had been brought to a central hospital, of whom eight died.

On February 4, according to reports gathered by the Reuters journalist quoted above, at least 41 persons were admitted to one hospital in Wazir Akbar Khan, 10 persons died at a nearby military hospital (with "many more" injured) and at the Jamhuriat hospital, there were 26 wounded admitted, of whom four died. Dr. Said Omar, a doctor at Jamhuriat, told the journalist, "This is heavy artillery and it totally cuts up the bodies... This is the worst morning we have had."

On February 8, 1993, Hizb-e-Islami and Wahdat forces fired rockets and artillery at Jamiat positions throughout the day, including in civilian areas in the eastern and central parts of the city, while Jamiat positions on Bibi Mahro hill, behind the Wazir Akbar Khan neighborhood, fired rockets at Hizb-e-Islami positions to the south. Scores of shells and rockets fell in the city: in Microrian, Wazir Akbar Khan, West Kabul, Afshar, and neighborhoods on the lower part of Television Mountain, killing and injuring hundreds of people. There was also fighting between Jamiat and Hizb-e-Islami in and near the Russian Embassy and the Presidential Palace. That day, a hospital in Wazir Akbar Khan reported 20 dead and 60 wounded; a journalist saw the hallways filled with groaning patients with shrapnel wounds, and dead bodies in the parking lot. Dr. Mohammad Qasem told the journalist, "This is the highest number since the fighting began." Medical staff at other hospitals couldn't count the bodies that day, "We don't have time to count them, we're too busy trying to look after them," a nurse at the Jamhuriat hospital told another journalist.

By the end of the first week of February, medical staff in Kabul reported 800 deaths and 3,500 to 4,000 injuries since January 19, 1993 — a three week period — while pointing out that the number of dead was likely much higher, since most families were not bringing the civilian dead to hospitals or reporting deaths. Armin Kobel, the chief of ICRC, told journalists that 368 wounded were admitted to Kabul's hospitals February 10. On February 12, a doctor at an ICRC hospital told an Agence France-Presse journalist that the total dead citywide in the period (civilian and combatants) was probably around 5,000.

A Kabul resident who was present in West Kabul at the time of the fighting told Human Rights Watch, "It was a terrible time. There were rockets coming

every day. During the night, bullets and artillery would be launched from Qargha from the west [area on the border of Paghman district to the west of Kabul, controlled by Jamiat and Sayyaf's Ittihad forces]. And from the mountain, Mamorine [controlled by Jamiat], came shells. They were shelling from Mamorine, into Afshar, hitting the side of mountain. We lived in the basement during this time... "

Another witness, a doctor who was a medical student at a hospital at the time, told Human Rights Watch about the situation in both West Kabul and the central city, "There was a lot of fighting going on in our neighborhood around this time. There were many times I saw fighting like this.

We saw terrible rocketing and shelling, by Shura-e-Nezar and by Hekmatyar. Rockets hitting hospitals; people would be broken into pieces: hands, feet, heads. One time, a rocket flew in and exploded at the Amniat hospital, where we were studying at the time because of the insecurity at the main university. It was about ten in the morning... Some doctors died, some of the female students died, one girl went crazy, from an injury to her head.

One girl lost her eyes. I myself saw all of this — the damage after the rocket hit: people torn into pieces. Many people were killed by that rocket. It came from the west, over Television Mountain [the main peak in central Kabul, suggesting it was fired from Hekmatyar's positions in southwest Kabul]."

A resident of Afshar in West Kabul told Human Rights Watch how his brother and later his father were killed by shelling and rockets in his neighborhood in late January 1993, "One early morning [the last week of January], while I was still asleep, my older brother went down to a well below our house [down the mountain] to get some water for the family... Later, the neighbors woke us, telling us to come down to this shop... We went down: there were seven or eight corpses, lined up near this store there. We were told that a rocket had hit near to the well, and my brother had been killed. There were explosions all the time in those days... We couldn't bury him, it was so unsafe to be outside for too long... That night, we took him out to bury him near to our house. We brought a hurricane lamp with us, but didn't light it. It was quiet, as we dug a hole and the cleric with us spoke and we prayed. Then we lit the hurricane lamp, in order to

lower him into the ground. As soon as we lit that hurricane lamp, we heard them firing from Mamorine [the mountain southeast of Afshar, held by Jamiat], and explosions hit nearby, so we extinguished the light and buried him in the dark. It was Shura-e-Nezar [Jamiat forces].

They would shoot at us from Mamorine all the time — at ordinary civilians. They would shoot at anyone, but especially crowds of four or more."

The man's father was killed in an attack three days later, "It was morning, and we thought we could go out, it was quiet. We needed some food. So my father went out. As he was going down the steps, in the mountain, a rocket hit very near to him. My father collapsed. We went to him. Shrapnel had hit him. He was seriously wounded. We started to carry him, to get a way to go to the hospital. But he was bleeding so much, and it didn't stop. He bled to death... When we had to bury him, we faced the same difficulties as with my brother."

Thousands of civilians fled their homes in Kabul throughout late January and early February. Human Rights Watch interviewed several men who sent their families out of Kabul during this time, complaining of the constant fighting. "We left because there was heavy shelling and a lot of shooting, with heavy weapons," one man who fled in early February told Human Rights Watch. "Sakr [Soviet-made] rockets were flying into the area [west Kabul]... The artillery and rockets were hitting the houses, indiscriminately. We didn't feel safe, so we left." Journalists in Kabul at the time reported seeing families fleeing on roads out of the city. One man shouted to journalists as he pushed a cart with his belongings out of the city on February 9, "These Mujahideen are taking us back to the first century!"

February 1993: the Afshar Campaign

Human Rights Watch received credible and consistent accounts from several officials who worked in Shura-e-Nezar and the interim government that a military campaign against Wahdat was planned and approved by officials at the highest levels of Jamiat and Shura-e-Nezar, Ittihad, and the Rabbani government.

The Afghan Justice Project, the independent non-governmental group that investigated the Afshar incident and other military operations in Afghanistan from 1979 through 2001, described the operation in a January 2005 report:

A resident described to Human Rights Watch how he learned of the attack, "A friend of mine, he was involved in Shura-e-Nezar.

He worked in the headquarters and in the government. He came to me, before the invasion, two days before, and he said 'You must get out of here. There is an order for an invasion. Paghmani people [Ittihad] will attack this area, kill everyone, and loot every house.'"

Another said, "Five days before the attack, a nephew of mine who was a bodyguard for Anwari [Harakat's leader] came and told me 'You should get out of here, this place will collapse. And even if you are not a combatant, there will be lots of destruction.'" Two days later, at night, we left.

The operation's key was the top of Afshar mountain itself, lying above Afshar neighborhood. The military strategy centered around Jamiat taking control of the peaks of the mountain, before moving on Wahdat positions at the southeast base of the hill, to the east of Afshar's civilian area. Just before the attack, agents in the Jamiat-controlled Afghan intelligence service, or *Amniat-e-Milli*, headed by Mohammad Fahim (Afghanistan's defense minister from 2001-2004 and a key military ally of the United States during operations against the Taliban in late 2001) paid off several Harakat faction commanders to the north and west of Afshar, to cooperate with the invasion and allow Jamiat and Ittihad troops to pass their posts unmolested and to seize Afshar's peak. When the attack later began, Jamiat forces did seize Afshar's peak, and Ittihad entered Afshar itself and took control of Wahdat positions at the Academy of Social Science and along the road that runs south of Afshar from Paghman into central Kabul. Jamiat forces also took positions on the roads leading in and out of Afshar. Wahdat forces, meanwhile, fled south into west Kabul, leaving the predominately Hazara civilian population of Afshar in the hands of the predominately Pashtun Ittihad troops.

The senior leadership of Jamiat at the time included:

Mullah Izzat (Izzatullah), a commander in Paghman,
Mohammad Qasim Fahim (the head of Amniat-e-Melli),
Baba Jan,
Anwar Dangar,
Gadda Mohammad; Baba Jalander,
Haji Almas; Gul Haider,
And Bismillah Khan.
Ittihad's leadership at the time included:
Sayyaf himself,
Haji Shir Alam,
Zalmay Tufan,
Abdullah Shah,
And Mullah Taj Mohammad.

Several mid-level commanders were probably also at the meeting.

There was periodic artillery and rocket fire directed at the Afshar area February 7-10. According to residents who lived in Afshar at the time, ordinance fell repeatedly on the civilian homes below the top of Afshar Mountain and to the west and northwest of Mazari's headquarters at the Academy of Social Science.

A resident who was wounded at the time told Human Rights Watch about the effects of the initial artillery fire, "They [referring to Ittihad and Jamiat] were firing at the top of the hill [Afshar]... Mostly the artillery was falling into this area. Many houses were hit.

Our house was hit during this time. I remember: I heard my son shriek. I was wounded also, in the torso here, in the stomach. My granddaughter was also killed by the same shell, and my other daughter was wounded in the face and disfigured. My house was on fire.

Three or four other houses were hit as well around here [gesturing in a circle]."

Another resident, J.L.S., saw the beginning of the attack, "My house is at the foot of the mountain. I woke up early on the morning of the attack, to take ablution for prayer.

Suddenly, there was a lot of artillery firing. I looked up toward the communication center [at the top of Afshar Mountain] and it was on fire. The base was on fire. There was a lot of artillery landing nearby."

One resident, a Tajik man who lived in Afshar, said that the constant firing of shells and rockets kept many residents inside, "Before the invasion, there was no announcement or effort to make people leave, or evacuate. No one knew what was happening, everyone was a prisoner in their home." The man described seeing a neighbor hit by shrapnel on or about February 7, "Mir Yaqub, a neighbor of mine just next to me, in the house below, a rocket hit his house and he was killed. This was about four days before the main attack started.

After the rocket hit, I looked out this little space, between the bags of dirt we had laid in the windows. I looked out and down into his yard, and I saw that he had been injured, and was lying on the ground.

Members of his family picked him up . . . to take him to the hospital, but he died [there], and they brought him back and buried him on the mountain."

The Ground Attack

The Afshar operation started in earnest in the early hours of February 11, 1993. Jamiat forces (with Harakat's agreement to allow it) seized the top of Afshar Mountain itself.

L.S., an Afshar resident, told Human Rights Watch how the morning unfolded, "It was five o' clock in the morning.

There were rockets firing and artillery... At first, people thought, 'It is fighting between the Mujahideen.' I myself thought this, and I didn't worry so much. I thought that they were fighting amongst themselves — Rabbani, Wahdat — and that civilians would face no harm. But there was a lot of rocketing. Then around ten a.m. we saw the first troops come from the west, into Afshar... We stayed indoors."

A.L.S., another resident who was a boy when the attack occurred, said that many families started to flee as the morning progressed, including his own, "It was terrible. There were rockets, explosions... I saw a rocket hit a neighbor's house. His son was killed. There was blood pouring out of him. I saw that... The [ground] attack started sometime later. Our family left [then]. When we went, we saw a lot of dead bodies on the street: people who had been killed."

A resident, Q.L.N., described the scene of fleeing residents, "A number of families were fleeing. One family was holding a dead child, wouldn't let it go. One young girl had lost her family; she was wounded, dying on the ground."

F.A., a woman from Afshar, told Human Rights Watch about how both her husband and son were killed by Ittihad troops the first day of the attack, "As we were leaving [to flee Afshar], three of Sayyaf's gunmen came up to our house. My husband, my son, and us women. Just as we opened our door, they were there. They came in, and without exchanging a single word, they aimed their guns at my husband and my son and they shot both of them, right in front of our eyes... We were hitting our heads and sobbing and throwing ourselves on our men. The troops said that if we didn't stop screaming they would throw grenades at us and kill us...

F.W., Another woman, said she had to leave her wounded husband behind as she fled, "That first day, a rocket hit our house. My husband was wounded in the foot. He was bleeding... People were rushing around: men, women, children, all fleeing their houses, going toward the Intercontinental Hotel. I told my husband, 'Everyone is leaving, fleeing, no one is left.' And I said that we should go. But he said, 'I can't move. I can't go with you. Leave me here, and flee.' And he told me to take the eldest daughter, and that taking her away was the most important thing... We went out [of the house], but I couldn't go. I couldn't leave him there — my husband. I had to go back. So I went back, and I told him that I wanted him to come with us, and that I would help him walk... So then we went, I was helping him, he had his arm around my shoulder. I was also carrying my three-month-old son, and my eldest daughter was holding my three-year-old. We got as far as the water canal [about 80 meters away]. At that moment, some

gunmen came up to us, Mullah Izzatullah's men. The commander said, 'Qalfak Chapat." [A derogatory term for Hazaras referring to their facial features.] I'm one of Izzatullah's men, and I've been ordered to seize this area. I'll teach you a lesson you'll never forget, for all of history.' He was a fat strong man, in plain Afghan clothes. But they didn't do anything to us. They said, 'We can reach you anywhere you go, we are everywhere, we control everything.' And they moved on. So we were very scared. My husband said he could not go on. So we went back to our house. He made us leave, he insisted that I take our daughter, and so we went. We went [past] the Intercontinental... and we went to the Ismaili people [in Taimani], who helped us. A few days later, a neighbor came to us, a Tajik who knew what was going on. He told us that Afshar was destroyed, my house was burned, and my husband was killed... "

The woman returned to the house over a year later, "When we entered the house, we found only a skull, and four big bones, on the ground. There was nothing else. A neighbor, who knew Sayyaf's people and had seen more of what happened, told me that my husband was shot with many bullets and killed."

R.J.G., Another resident, said that he witnessed rockets fired into crowds of fleeing civilians off the top of Afshar Mountain on the afternoon of February 11, "Jamiat took the top of the mountain. Around five in the afternoon, they started firing rockets from the top of the mountain, down into this area. They killed people right here on this street. People were rushing out of Afshar. They were rushing down this street here [the main street running north south through the eastern part of Afshar]. The street was filled with people, running away from Afshar... My house is right there, at the top of the street... Massoud's forces were shooting at them... They were firing into this street. Three times the street was hit. Seventeen people were killed — there were seventeen bodies lying in the street — we counted. The corpses were lying here in the streets... Clearly they were civilians. Yes, it was clear: they had burqas, there were children. It was clear they were civilians."

L.M., Another resident, was almost killed by a rocket the next day, "As we were walking up towards our compound, a shell or a rocket hit right in front of

my compound. I was walking with my two neighbors, both of them were hit. One was killed instantly. A piece of the rocket went into his eye, and out the back of his head. He died. And the other person was hit in the knee, and he was injured, and he fell down. We were about fifty meters from where the explosion was... I was not wounded. It was a miracle."

Y.B.K., a Hazara Afshar resident who was a boy at the time, said he was arrested in his house by troops he believed were Pashtun — likely Ittihad — and taken to the Academy of Social Science. He said he saw scores of dead civilians on the way. "I saw some Paghmani people [i.e., Ittihad], searching house by house. I fled into my house. This commander, Hassan Yaldar [the witness said he learned the name of the commander from his neighbor, mentioned below], came into our house, with seven or eight gunmen... They grabbed me and took me with them. I was afraid... Hassan Yaldar pushed me down to the ground, and he kneeled on my chest, pulled out his bayonet, and pushed it into [against] my throat. — 'Where are the guns?' he yelled at me. — 'I don't know anything, I swear to God,' I said. But he hit me with a strong slap. And he was yelling at me. I was crying and crying. I was so afraid. Then, the other gunmen told him to release him, and he did, and they started to beat me, kicking me, punching me, and hitting me with their guns. I had cuts all over my body. I was hurt badly. On the way, I saw fifty or sixty corpses all over the roads. Some were shot. Some were cut up, limbs severed. There was a lot of blood on the ground. It was a shocking scene. It stuck in my mind how awful it was... Some of them were shot. I saw some bodies; their stomachs had been cut open. Others had been hit in explosions, in rockets, and were burned... I think that most were killed by gunmen... "

F.W., quoted above, who fled during the fighting east toward the Hotel Intercontinental, said that some troops were stopping civilians and killing some of them at the side of the road, although at least one commander attempted to stop abuses, "While we were fleeing, toward the Intercontinental, the troops were stopping civilians, and killing them. One of the commanders said to the troops, 'Stop bothering these people. We are fighting with gunmen, not children and wives.' But some others disagreed with him, and said, 'No, on the battlefield, everyone is an enemy. Everyone who helps the enemy is an enemy.'"

Some residents said that Jamiat troops stopped Hazaras as well, and arrested them. Q.L.N told Human Rights Watch that he saw Jamiat troops stopping Hazara civilians at a post at Bagh-e-Bala, "Qari Mohib, the Jamiat commander, stopped me... They took my watch, my clothes... There were two wounded people in the car with me, Hazara. They [the Jamiat troops] just said 'You're Hazara, you must come with us.'"

Q.L.N. said he was able to be released because another Jamiat commander there knew him. "The others were taken," he said.

As he fled later, L.M. saw Ittihad troops beating a Hazara teenager at a check post, "[H]e was the son of the servant at the mosque. He was behind us [as we left Afshar]. The gunmen stopped him, and started to beat him. I turned around, and I said, 'Stop, he is the son of the servant at the mosque. He's not a fighter.' But they pulled him off and took him away somewhere. Three days later, when I came back, I saw his corpse behind the wall of the Academy of Social Science. I saw two corpses; his was one of them."

L.S., a Hazara man said that he saw thirty to forty other Hazara men and boys lined up against a wall, guarded by Ittihad troops, "The gunmen were tying people up and putting them against the wall. Women were crying, or they were running away. They were very afraid. The soldiers saw us and came over to us. I know who the commander was: Shir Agha Zarshakh. It was one of Sayyaf's commanders."

According to L.S., Shir Agha Zarshakh addressed him specifically, "'He said, "Hey, Hazara: this is your graveyard. Where are you going?' I said, 'I am an ordinary person. I have no involvement with political parties or fighting. I live here with my family.' He said, 'Whether you are a civilian or not a civilian, you are Hazara.' And immediately the soldiers started beating me with the butts of their guns. My seven-year old son rushed away from my wife towards me, to help me, but one of the gunmen hit him hard with a gun, and knocked him down to the ground. Then the gunman took the bayonet off his gun, and put it up to my boy's throat, like to cut off his head. I started shrieking, and the women started shrieking, and my wife and some other women threw themselves on top

of the boy. The soldier moved back, toward me. I signaled with my hand to my wife to leave, to go. Then the women rushed off with the boy."

J.L.S., quoted above, a physically disabled Hazara man in Afshar who was detained in a house by Ittihad troops on February 12, told Human Rights Watch that troops beat him, "They beat me, really badly. I am a lame person [disabled]. I said [to them], 'I am just a lame man, I can hardly walk.'" J.L.S. also said the troops harassed his female relatives.

Y.B.K., quoted above, said that Ittihad troops started searching houses, apparently to look for weapons but also to harass Hazara civilians. He described seeing one of his neighbors being harassed, a 70-year-old man, "They said, 'Hey, old man, where are your guns?' The old man said, 'I don't have anything, I don't have any guns.' But the troops knocked him down and punched him. They took him by the ankles and held him upside down into the well [hanging into the well], and yelled at him, 'Where are the guns?' But he yelled out, 'My dear son, have mercy on me! I don't have any guns!' They pulled him up again, and they threw him on the ground... "

As he left his house for the second time, R.J.G. said he saw Ittihad troops randomly kill a Hazara boy who was passing a nearby check post on the way out of Afshar, "I saw Sayyaf's troops kill this guy on the street here, a Hazara, about 16 years old. I saw from my house. There were these gunmen posted here, and this guy was passing on his way down the road. The gunmen, they were Pashtuns. They didn't do anything to the boy as he went by, and the boy passed. After he passed, they shot him in the back, two of them I think, and he was killed..."

L.S., quoted above, told Human Rights Watch that after he was arrested on February 12, Ittihad gunmen forced him to bury corpses and load trucks with stolen goods, "[After we were arrested,] three trucks arrived. Since my home was closest, they made us go into that house, to take out the property. They made us go in and carry all my property to the truck. We loaded property from many houses... "

L.S. said that he and other detainees were then taken to the campus of the Polytechnic University nearby, where they were tied up. L.S. said that Ittihad troops beat them once they were tied up, kicking them and hitting them with their guns. The men were later untied, said L.S., and deployed to pick up dead civilians and bury them. "They said, 'Go and collect your corpses in Afshar, go collect your dead.' So we went out, with them guarding us. The first person we found was Faizal Ahmed, an old man. He was decapitated. One of his arms was cut off and one of his legs. And his penis was cut off, and his penis was put in his mouth. Then we collected three other corpses, near Balki's shrine, and four others from the street between the Academy of Social Science and the police academy. We buried all of these eight across from the Polytechnic mosque, in the potato field there. As they were looting, they were saying, 'You Hazaras were asking to be kings, but you don't deserve these things. We deserve these things.' Almost forty trucks were loaded, I think. From seven to ten a.m., we found eleven corpses... We found one seven-year-old boy, he was decapitated. His head was nearby, it had been cut off, from behind: you could see from the head that they cut from the back, and that the skin had been torn off from the front of his neck, not cut. We found a woman in the same house, dead. She was holding a copy of the Koran in her arms, embracing it. Then we found the two women who I told you about before, who had been stabbed. We found seven other bodies, in the streets. Men. They had been shot. Three of them were shot in the head. We buried them behind Balki mosque, on the east side... Later, we loaded more trucks: at around two p.m., we went to Cotton Textile Street, and Shir Ali Street, and took the property out of those houses. In a house on Cotton Textile Street, we saw a man, Haji Hassan: his head was cut off, and his feet, and his hands. There was nowhere to bury him, and no time: they were not letting us bury the corpses. So we put him into the well there. It would be better for him than to be eaten by dogs... Then we went on to Shir Ali street. There, there was a woman who was shot. She had been the wife of the servant in the mosque there. We wanted to bury her, but they didn't let us. They said, 'Let her lie here. Let the other people learn from this, and fear us.' On Jaghori Street, there was a guy there, Hussein Ali, he was about eighteen. He had been shot. They did not let us bury him either. 'There are many others like him, you can't spend all your time burying people.' [They said.] 'There are others who will be eaten by dogs, let

him be eaten too.' These all were Shir Agha Zarshakh's men. He was with us the whole time."

L.S. said he escaped from custody the second night after he was arrested, "Of the forty other people who were imprisoned with me, we never heard of them again, or found them. We have talked to their families: none of them was ever returned, and no one ever saw them again."

A.Q.L., another Hazara man who was arrested during the operation, told Human Rights Watch that he was also forced to help Ittihad troops loot homes, "Four armed men from Sayyaf's forces came. It was around 10 a.m. I begged for mercy, saying, 'We are commoners.' They said, 'You are Hazara, you work for Mazari.' They beat me up... Sayyaf's men forced me to carry the loot... "

Y.B.K., also quoted above, said that he saw Ittihad troops forcing residents to carry looted goods, "The troops were making [people who they arrested] drag precious things with them, like they were porters. They were carrying what the troops looted, behind them." He saw civilians forced to "drag the corpses out on to the street." He also said his own home was looted, "They took everything valuable. What they couldn't take, they broke into pieces — for instance, the refrigerators."

L.M., the Ismaili man quoted above, was also detained and forced to work, after he returned to Afshar to look for his son, who had gone back to get some of his belongings and (as L.M. later learned) was detained as well, "I saw many corpses on the road... Many had been shot, or stabbed. I went to my home. Everything was stolen. There was nothing there. They had taken all the valuable things, and what was left, too big to take, had been broken, and shot with bullets, like the refrigerator."

L.M. said he could not find his son, and he went to a nearby mosque to pray, "I was really upset, and feeling very sad and broken. I went to the shrine, and I prayed there. When I finished praying, I stood up, and some gunmen saw me. They called me over, and they said, 'Old man! Who are you?' I said, 'I am an inhabitant of this area.' And they said, 'Oh yes, we know you. You have two guns.

Give them to us.' I said, 'Believe me, I swear to God, I am only a shopkeeper.' They said, 'No, you are a fighter, give us the guns.' I said again, 'I don't have any.' But they started to beat me. They all beat me, all of them. I fell to the ground, my eyes were hurt, they turned black and blue later. My head was full of bumps. After they beat me, they made me stand up, and they ordered me to walk towards the north of Afshar, with them. As we went, they entered into houses, to search, or to shoot people. They were laughing, enjoying themselves."

L.M. said that the troops took him into a small cemetery, where he says he saw the corpses of about eleven boys, "They made me walk up and stand next to those corpses. They said to me, 'Give us the guns, or you will face the same fate as these eleven boys.' They were all around me, pointing their guns. They ordered me to sit down on the ground.The commander said, 'I'll count to three, and you have to confess.' I said, 'I am a Muslim, let me pray, and then kill me.' They told me, 'You're dirty, you're not a Muslim-you're Shia.'"

L.M. says they took him to a nearby compound, Qala Said, where there was a *tokia khana*, a Shia prayer hall, and made him carry out belongings from it, "They made me go in and carry out many valuable things, everything. They sent for a truck, to load things into. Then the troops put L.M. in a car and drove west with him, toward Paghman. When we got to the Qargha, they stopped. There was a house there. We went into that house, and there they divided up all the property. I carried the property into the house. I saw them divide it. The commander got two shares, and the soldiers got one share.

A.Q.L. says he was then kept there, essentially as a slave, for the next three years, working on a base controlled by Zalmay Toofan, one of Sayyaf's main commanders, "They took me to Khandaq Tarik in Kampani, to Zalmay Toofan's base... They threw us in a container. There were forty prisoners there, Hazaras, in that one container.

Both A.Q.L. and L.M. (quoted earlier) told Human Rights Watch that their sons were also arrested by Ittihad. A.Q.L. said his son was only eight years old when he was taken, and was kept for over three years. L.M.'s son was 16 when he was arrested. L.M. managed to have him released after about two months,

when he learned that he was being held at Bagh-e-Daoud, in Paghman, by a commander under Mullah Izzatullah, namL.M.'s son, who was held for about two months, became mentally ill soon after his released Masjida. Now he is insane."Human Rights Watch researchers observed L.M.'s son in 2003, in a semi-catatonic state.

As detailed in earlier sections, Ittihad was not the only faction implicated in abductions. The Afshar campaign also exposed further Wahdat abuses: An Ittihad soldier who fought in the Afshar campaign told Human Rights Watch that after his troops seized the Academy of Social Science from Wahdat, they found several women there who said they had been raped by Wahdat.

They also found a small pile of corpses of women prisoners. In another room, they found another pile of dead men and approximately twenty-five male prisoners, "They were all completely insane — from being tortured. They were completely, completely insane." The man said he was unable to stay longer to get a more detailed look, "I ran away. Because of the smell. It was disgusting."

The effects of the Afshar campaign

The commission was comprised of civilians appointed by Wahdat and Harakat leaders, and they received complaints from families of approximately 800 arrests during the operation, mostly males between the ages of ten and thirty-five, with a small number of approximately 700-750 persons were never returned, and were presumably killed or died in captivity. The commission said it documented that approximately 70 to 80 people were also killed in the streets in Afshar, a figure which is consistent with the testimony in this report.

The same official said that the commission received information that many women were abducted during the operation, but said that few families would report it. The commission estimated that approximately 5,000 houses were looted in the Afshar area during and after the operation, a figure which is not inconsistent with the accounts and information received by Human Rights Watch.

After Afshar

The Afshar campaign and the surrounding violence were ended by a short-lived peace agreement fashioned in late February 1993. (Hamid Gul, the former head of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence, or ISI, flew into Kabul in February and took part in negotiations.) Hekmatyar was granted a position in the Rabbani government as prime minister, but would not enter the city to take up his post.

By late March, Hizb-e-Islami forces were again attacking Jamiat and Ittihad positions in the city. Violence continued in the city throughout the year. By the end of 1993, Junbish switched sides and join Hekmatyar's forces, launching a new chapter of violence in the city. January 1994 was marked by huge battles in east Kabul, more shelling, and more civilian deaths. Violence continued through 1994 into 1995, at which point the Abdul Rab al-Rasool Sayyaf, the overall leader of Ittihad, is implicated in the war crimes documented above either directly or indirectly, as a matter of command responsibility.

As a senior leader of Ittihad, Sayyaf controlled all Ittihad commanders throughout the Afshar attack. Witnesses, including a soldier who fought with Ittihad, say that they saw Sayyaf coordinating military operations during the campaign and meeting with subcommanders. Sayyaf met with senior Ittihad commanders in Paghman the day before the Afshar campaign to discuss the Afshar attack. Sayyaf was also present at the meeting convened by Massoud in the Hotel Intercontinental on the second day of the Afshar operation on February 12. His leadership role in Ittahad as well as his involvement in planning the Afshar campaign place him in the position of being directly responsible for abuses or culpable under the doctrine of command responsibility.

Other Ittihad commanders are potentially implicated. Several officials, journalists, and military commanders described how Ittihad commanders Shir Alam, Zalmay Toofan, Mullah Taj Mohammad, Abdullah Wardak, "Doctor" Abdullah, and Abdullah Shah had effective control over troops engaged in abductions and street fighting with Wahdat forces in west Kabul, and said that they commanded troops at Afshar. Commanders Khanjar and Patang were said to have been commanding troops at Afshar.

The Afghan Justice Project interviewed witnesses who identified other commanders who were seen directing troops during the Afshar campaign, including "Doctor" Abdullah and Khanjar, as well as other Ittihad commanders, including Jaglan Naeem, Abdul Manan Diwana, Amanullah Kochi, Shirin, Mushtaq Lalai, and Mullah Kachkol.

Several Jamiat commanders, including Massoud, Fahim, Baba Jalander, Bismillah Khan, Baba Jan, Ahmadi Takhari, Kabir Andarabi, and Mullah Izzat, were directly involved in the 1993 Afshar campaign, according to officials who worked within the Rabbani government in 1992-1993. General Fahim, who was chief of the Afghan intelligence service in 1992-1993 but controlled several military posts as well, was one of the chief commanders under Massoud.

Officials in the Rabbani government in 1992-1993 told Human Rights Watch that Fahim was directly involved in the Afshar attack, controlled at least one of the military posts on Television Mountain throughout the period of this report, and that he was involved in the planning of the Afshar campaign and took part in negotiations with Harakat commanders to gain their cooperation before the attack. The same officials said Mullah Izzat and Anwar Dangar were also involved in the Afshar campaign.

Culpability of specific individuals

The militias and political-military parties implicated in the abuses outlined in this report include the Jamiat, Ittihad, Hizb-e-Islami, Wahdat, Harakat, and Junbish factions.

Wahdat

During the period discussed in this report, Wahdat forces were under the overall command of Abdul Ali Mazari (killed in 1995). Abdul Karim Khalili (as of mid-2005 one of the two vice-presidents under President Hamid Karzai) served as Mazari's deputy (he later took over Wahdat after Mazari's death). Second-tier Wahdat commanders in Kabul included Abdul Wahid Turkmani,

Mohsin Sultani, Tahir Toofan, Sedaqat Jahori, and Commander Bahrami. Wahdat's two main commanders in west Kabul were Shafi Diwana ("Shafi the Mad") and Nasir Diwana ("Nasir the Mad"). Wahdat factions engaged in a pattern and practice of abductions and arbitrary detentions, usually directed at civilians and apparently based on ethnic animus.

Ittihad

Ittihad forces in 1992-1993 were under the overall command of Abdul Rabb al-Rasool Sayyaf. Second-tier Ittihad commanders included Shir Alam (parliamentary candidate and as of mid-2005 a senior commander in the defense ministry), Zalmay Toofan (until mid-2005 a senior commander in the defense ministry), Mullah Taj Mohammad (as of mid-2005, parliamentary candidate, head of political group called the Kabul Citizen's Counsel; governor of Kabul in 2003-2004), Abdullah Wardak (former minister of martyrs and disabled in President Karzai's interim 2002-2004 cabinet), "Doctor" Abdullah (as of mid-2005 a commander in the ministry of defense; no relation to Dr. Abdullah, the current foreign minister of Afghanistan), and Abdullah Shah (executed by the Afghan government in April 2004). Other commanders reported to hold senior positions were Khanjar (deceased), Patang, Jaglan Naeem (as of mid-2005 reported to be serving as an official in the ministry of interior), Abdul Manan Diwana (as of mid-2005 reported to be governor of a district in Sar-e-Pol province), Noor Aqi (reported to be serving as an official in the ministry of defense), Amanullah Kochi, Shirin, Mushtaq Lalai, and Mullah Kachkol (as of mid-2005 reported to be parliamentary candidate and commander in the ministry of defense).

Abdul Rab al-Rasool Sayyaf, the overall leader of Ittihad, is directly implicated in the abductions and the indiscriminate and intentional targeting of civilians documented in this report.

As a senior leader of Ittihad, Sayyaf had effective control over all Ittihad commanders throughout the period covered here.

Hizb-e-Islami

Hizb-e-Islami in 1992-1993 was headed by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, whose current location is unknown. The Kabul-based commanders on the council were

the Generals Faiz Mohammad (deceased) and Kashmir Khan (location unknown).

The Hizb-e-Islami chief of staff was initially held by Commander Sabawon (as of mid-2005 an advisor to President Karzai), but shifted to Kashmir Khan sometime in 1992. The chief artillery officer who supervised shelling and rocketing operation during late 1992 into 1993 was Toran Khalil. The head of Hizb-e-Islami, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, is centrally implicated in all of the crimes noted above.

Several mediators negotiated with Hekmatyar on peace initiatives in 1992 and 1993, as the head of Hizb-e-Islami, and journalists repeatedly met with Hekmatyer in his apacity as the leader of Hizb-e-Islami forces in the same period. The then head of Pakistani Intelligence, Hamid Gul, negotiated with Hekmatyar in February 1993 and again in March 1993. Prince Turki al-Faisal, chief of Saudi Intelligence, and Asad Durrani, Director-General of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence, negotiated between Hekmatyar and Ahmed Shah Massoud via radio in April 1992.

Commander Toran Khalil, chief artillery officer in Hizb-e-Islami who supervised shelling and rocketing operations during late 1992 into 1993, commander of a base at an oil depot at the south of Charasyab, south of Kabul.

Toran Amanullah, commander of the Firqa Sama, stationed at the Rishkor military base, south of Kabul (as of mid-2005 in custody of the U.S. military).

Commander Zardad, commander of a military post at the Lycee Shorwaki (in mid-2005 on trial in the United Kingdom under universial jurisdication laws, for torture committed in Afghanistan in the 1990s).

Engineer Zulmai, of the Lashkar Issar, commander of a post at the Kotal Hindki pass to the south of Chilsatoon, south of Kabul, near the Rishkor base (as of mid-2005 a government official in Nangahar province).

Nur Rahman Panjshiri, commander of a post in the village of Shahak, to the southeast of Kabul, directly controlled by the Sama division.

General Wali Shah, an officer in the Najibullah government who joined Hezb-e Islami in 1992.

Jamiat, Shura-e-Nezar, and the Afghan Government of 1992-1993

Jamiat and Shura-e-Nezar forces, at the time discussed in this report, were under the overall command of Ahmed Shah Massoud (killed on September 9,

2001). Second tier military commanders included Mohammad Qasim Fahim (Afghanistan's defense minister 2001-2004; as of mid-2005 holding a symbolic position as "Marshall for Life"); Baba Jalander (director of the Afghan Red Crescent Society from late 2001-2004); Bismillah Khan (as of mid-2005 the chief of staff of the Afghan Army); Gul Haider (as of mid-2005 a general serving in the defense ministry); and Younis Qanooni (former minister of education and national security advisor in President Karzai's 2002-2004 cabinet; as of mid-2005 the chief of Nehzat-e-Melli, a political party, also known as Afghanistan Naveen). Middle level Jamiat commanders in Kabul included Baba Jan (as of mid-2005 the chief of police in Herat), General Abdul Momin (deceased), and Basir Salangi (chief of police in Kabul in 2003; as of mid-2005 chief of police in Wardak province), as well as other commanders Kabir Andarabi (until mid-2005 a senior ministry of defense commander, stationed in Bagrami; as of mid-2005 a police official in the ministry of interior), Haji Almas (parliamentary candidate and businessman; as of mid-2005 a senior commander in the ministry of defense, stationed in Parwan), Baz Mohammad Ahmadi (as of mid- 2005 an official in the ministry of defense), Mullah Izzat (parliamentary candidate; as of 2005 a senior ministry of defense commander), Panah (reportedly deceased), and Anwar Dangar (joined the Taliban in 1996 and was killed in Peshawar in 2004).

Ahmad Shah Massoud is implicated in many of the abuses documented in this report, both those committed by Jamiat forces, and those committed by other militia forces under his command.

This government was headed from April to June 1992 by Sibghatullah Mujaddidi, and then held by Burhanuddin Rabbani, the political leader of Jamiat. Both men were involved in military decision-making processes during the period of this report, and should be further investigated to determine their potential culpability for abuses.

Junbish

Abdul Rashid Dostum, a former General in Soviet-backed Afghan army in the 1980's, was and is the overall leader of the Junbish party. (As of mid-2005

Dostum was serving as a senior general in the ministry of defense and was exercising military influence over several provinces in the north of Afghanistan. He also ran for president in the 2004 election.) Secondary Junbish commanders in 1992-1993 included Abdul Cherik (deceased), Majid Rouzi (a senior military official in the Junbish faction), Mohsin Homayun Fouzi (reportedly a senior official in the ministry of defense), Jura Beig (reportedly deceased), Rasool Pahlavan, Zeini Pahlavan, and Rahim Pahlavan.

Harakat

The Harakat party, at the time of these abuses, was officially under the overall control of Mohammad Asif Mohsini, but its main military commanders were Hussein Anwari and Mohammad Ali Javeed (both members of President Karzai's interim cabinet, 2002-2004; Anwari was appointed governor of Kabul in 2005; Javeed is now the political leader of Harakat).

Afterword: The Complicity of Other Countries

As noted earlier in this report, the Soviet Union spent approximately U.S. $36 to $48 billion to support successive Afghan regimes in the 1980s, while the other countries noted above sent roughly U.S. $6 to $12 billion in aid to Mujahideen groups. Even after the Soviet Union departed in 1989, the Soviet government continued to support the Najibullah government, and the United States and Pakistan continued to support Mujahideen groups. Hizb-e-Islami forces continued to receive large scale military assistance from the United States and Pakistan through the early 1990s. Wahdat and Harakat continued to receive funding from Iran though the 1990s.All of this military aid, training, and financial support — by the Soviet Union, United States, United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, China, Pakistan, and Iran — provided these countries varying degrees of leverage over the armed groups they supported.

www.hrw.org/reports/2005/07/06/blood-stained-hands

4

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Arms and ammunition after 1992

After the fall of President Najibullah's government in April 1992, military equipment, including weapons and ammunition held by the Afghan army, was seized by the warring factions. Much came under the control of Shura-e-Nezar, but large quantities were also taken over by the forces of Hizb-e-Islami (Hekmatyar), Junbish-e-Milli Islami of General Dostum and Hizb-e-Wahdat. Smaller armed political groups also took a share of the stockpile.

At least seven military air bases — at Bagram, Kabul, Shindand, Kandahar, Jalalabad, Feyzabad and Kunduz — were operational in Afghanistan before April 1992. With the exception of those at Kandahar and Jalalabad, these came under the control of Shura-e-Nezar and Jamiat-e-Islami. The hundreds of jet fighters, helicopter gunships and other military aircraft left behind by the Soviet Union at the seven bases are now in the possession of both President Rabbani's and opposition forces. Some have been used since April 1992 to carry out raids apparently aimed deliberately at residential areas in Kabul and other parts of the country in order to punish the local population.

The huge ammunition depot at Shin-naray is believed to have changed hands several times since April 1992. It was initially reported to have come under the control of Shura-e-Nezar, which began to sell some of the ammunition. In 1993 it was seized by Hizb-e-Islami (Hekmatyar) and in late 1994 was believed to have been taken over by the Taliban.

Weapons held in Shin-naray in early 1992 reportedly included 400 Stinger missiles; these were said to have been transferred to Pakistan when the depot came under Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's control. As of early 1993, it was estimated that some 15,000 truck-loads of ammunition were being stored there.

All sides in the civil war appear to have access to an enormous range of powerful weaponry, which they continue to use to kill civilians deliberately and arbitrarily. For instance, Hizb-e-Islami used cluster bombs in an attack on people queuing for food. Government troops used cluster bombs in attacks against

residential areas in Kabul controlled by Hizb-e-Wahdat, such as Dasht-e-Azadgan, Sara-e-Ghazni, Karte Seh and Karte Char.

Current inflows of weapons and ammunition, often through secret channels and from various sources, continue to supplement the enormous arms glut in the country. India, Iran, Libya, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have reportedly maintained military or security links with the warring factions in Afghanistan and continue to supply them with weapons and ammunition, even though it is abundantly clear that weapons are being used to commit widespread human rights abuses.

Civilians targeted by bombings

The total number of unarmed Afghan civilians who have been killed by deliberate artillery attacks on residential areas in the past three years runs into the tens of thousands. Such killings have been reported from all parts of the country, although the vast majority of victims — more than 25,000 — have been killed in Kabul. They have died while posing no threat to anyone — while walking on the streets, sitting in their houses or sheltering in schools and mosques where they had hoped to find safety.

According to one estimate, up to 800 people were killed and over 17,000 wounded when factions attacked residential areas in Kabul between 12 September and 12 October, apparently because they suspected the local population of supporting their political rivals. Most of the victims were unarmed women and children. Between 21 and 24 October at least 95 people were killed and over 290 wounded in bombardments aimed solely at residential areas where there was no military activity. Artillery and mortar fire around Kabul

University, the Deh Mazang area and the so-called Television Mountain the same month killed at least 45 people and wounded 150. Eye-witnesses reported that one of the bombs hit a school which was being used as a shelter for displaced people, killing 10.

Reprisal bombardments of residential areas continue to be a feature of the

war. In March 1995 President Rabbani's forces launched a heavy assault using jet fighters against the Shia populated areas of Karte Seh in Kabul. This was apparently in retaliation for bomb attacks on Kabul allegedly by the forces of Hizb-e-Wahdat and the Taliban. Hizb-e-Wahdat defenses had broken, their positions had been abandoned and according to all reports, there were no signs of military resistance. Nevertheless, the troops opened fire on the defenseless population. On 12 March President Rabbani's soldiers reportedly rampaged through Karte Seh, looting houses, killing and beating unarmed civilians, and raping women.

The use of cluster bombs on residential areas has been a common feature of attacks by most of the rival factions. An eye-witness to a retaliatory attack in Farah province in early May 1995 by the forces of Ismael Khan told Amnesty International, "They dropped a lot of cluster bombs, killing between 220 and 250 people. A lot of those killed were ordinary people who neither opposed nor supported any of the factions. The fighting had stopped and there was no military activity in the area for several days. But Ismael Khan's MiG-21, MiG-23, Su-17 and Su-18 were used against the residential areas. There was no military resistance. Only ordinary people were killed."

Killings by armed guards

In March 1994 the forces of Hizb-e-Islami (Hekmatyar) reportedly opened fire on three journalists in a car, using Kalashnikov assault rifles. An Afghan translator, Saboor Siahsang, was hit in the neck. A Canadian journalist, Tyler Brule, was hit in both arms. All three survived.

Mir Wais Jalil, an Afghan BBC World Service journalist, was killed on 29 July 1994 after he had been abducted in an area reportedly controlled by Hizb-e-Islami (Hekmatyar). He had received numerous death threats from different Mujahideen parties, including Hizb-e-Islami. He was reportedly returning to Kabul after he had interviewed Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. A former associate of Mir Wais Jalil told Amnesty International that even before the incident, a rumor was

circulating in Kabul that he would be killed, "The wife of one of the members of Supreme Coordination Council came to Mir Wais Jalil's house two days before the event and told him that he should leave Kabul. She told him that there was a plot to kill him soon. There had been rumors for about a month that he would be killed. On the day he was killed, I was with a friend who was very worried. He said he could not eat because he had heard that something was going to happen to him that day."

People who resist the abduction and rape of women or who help abducted women to escape have often been killed themselves. In mid-1994, for example, a young woman (name withheld) was abducted by a commander allied to the forces of General Dostum in Mazar-e-Sharif. Eventually, she managed to escape and contacted a young man in her family who took her to Moscow. The commander got to know about the young man and tried to find him, but he was out of the country. A relative told Amnesty International, "The commander decided to punish the family. He abducted the young man's sister and raped her in front of her mother. He then beat the mother. The young man, unaware of these developments, returned to Mazar-e-Sharif. The commander's men found out and arrested him. They took him to the commander. The young man was beaten severely by the guards. Under torture, he disclosed the whereabouts of the young woman in Moscow. The commander then told the guards to bend him over; using his sword he beheaded the young man."

Other people have been killed apparently because the Mujahideen groups disapprove of their jobs or level of education. A woman described to Amnesty International how her brother had been killed and mutilated in Kunduz province in late 1992 before the family's eyes, "One day, a group of about 60 Mujahideen guards from Hizb-e-Islami of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar came to his house and told him he was to be executed because he had been teaching girls. They had a sharp axe and began to beat him. My brother kept shouting don't kill me, I am Muslim, don't kill me, but the guards said 'how could you have been a Muslim when you were teaching girls?'"

A woman whose family home had been raided by Mujahideen guards in

the western province of Farah in June 1994 told Amnesty International how her husband was first beaten and then executed in front of her and the children, "They kept beating him violently, saying he had been teaching girls at the village school. We all shouted for mercy but they did not stop. They then stood him in front of me and my four small children. One of them aimed a Kalashnikov at his heart and shot him dead."

In some cases, people have been killed on direct orders from party leaders. Others have been threatened with death if they disobey a commander's order. A man who had left Mazar-e-Sharif in early 1995 described how a local militia commander had threatened to kill the father of a teenage girl if he refused to give her away, "The people in charge of the area are all Mujahideen commanders or former army officers who had bombed and killed our people in the past 14 years. I know for instance that one of these commanders sends people to identify teenage girls. He then sends his guards to bring those girls to him. Recently, one of these commanders forced a family to give away their daughter to him. The family objected at first. The commander offered money but the family did not accept that. He then told them that he would take away the girl and kill the father. So they had to agree. This was in February 1995. This commander was first affiliated to Jamiat-e-Islami. Now he has made a pact with Abdul Rashid Dostum. The result is that he can do what he wants because he is attached to a strong military force."

In some cases prisoners have been killed in detention and their bodies dumped in uninhabited areas. For instance, several prisoners arrested by the forces of General Dostum in Mazar-e-Sharif were reportedly killed and their corpses dumped in different places in the city. The common knowledge of such abuses has created fear and insecurity among the civilian population.

Mass graves

Many deliberate and arbitrary killings — both before and after April 1992 — have not been reported. It is unlikely that anything will ever be known about

them except by the perpetrators and, perhaps, family members, neighbours or chance witnesses. In some instances, however, grim proof that they have happened is found when graves — often mass graves — are uncovered.

In 1992, just after the change of government, mass graves with dozens of bodies were discovered in Herat and close to Kabul in the Pul Charkhi area. In the midst of the civil war the graves were simply closed again.

Without a state structure in place, no investigation could be undertaken. Such discoveries have continued ever since. In March 1995, 22 bodies were reportedly discovered in a mass grave in Charasyab. Journalists watching troops of President Rabbani's government opening the grave reported that the bodies of the victims had been buried on top of each other in an irrigation ditch about 300 metres from the main road linking the town of Charasyab with Kabul. According to Reuter reports, the corpses were in varying stages of decay. The bodies were male, their hands were tied behind their backs and they had been shot in the head. Twenty of the victims were reportedly members of the Hazara Shia ethnic group.

It is difficult to establish which faction was responsible for these killings. Charasyab was captured by the Taliban from Hizb-e-Islami (Hekmatyar), which was then allied to Hizb-e-Wahdat, in late February 1995. In late March President Rabbani's forces pushed the Taliban out and captured the city.

Another mass grave was uncovered in early April 1995, when women and children reportedly discovered about 20 to 25 bodies in the basement of the Faculty of Medicine at Kabul University.

The bodies had been placed on laboratory shelves. They were decomposed and could not be identified. Among them was reportedly a couple in their wedding clothes. One body was believed to have been that of a pregnant woman.

Bodies were also reportedly discovered in early 1995 in wells in Karte Seh and Karte Char. They too had decomposed and could not be identified. Other bodies were found in brick-making furnaces in western Kabul.

Abductions, unacknowledged detention and hostage-taking

Some victims have been discovered when territory has changed hands. A detention centre belonging to Hizb-e-Wahdat was reportedly opened in March 1995 when government forces captured positions held by Hizb-e-Wahdat in Karte Seh, west of Kabul. Around 1,500 prisoners, including 150 women, were reportedly released.

The vast majority of those in unacknowledged detention, however, remain missing.

Most have been detained to punish them or so that their military expertise can be used.

Some have been targeted by forces allied to the transitional government in Kabul. For instance, Ajmal Sahak, aged 32, "disappeared" after being arrested on 19 May 1993 at his house in Khair Khana in Kabul by President Rabbani's forces; he had earlier been an officer in the presidential guard but in February 1991 had voluntarily retired from army service. He ran a vegetable shop in Kabul and was not politically active. His family has not been able to trace him.

Torture and ill-treatment

In recent years armed groups have been developing new forms of torture — as if the methods used for years were not bad enough. One of the most gruesome is the forcing of prisoners to eat what they are told is human flesh. A taxi driver travelling with a woman passenger was stopped by armed guards in early 1993. He later told Amnesty International, "We were stopped in Kote Sangi area of Kabul, which is controlled by Hizb-e-Wahdat. There were several of them. They took us to a house which they used as their base. They gave me a paper to write that I had sold my car to them. I refused, and they threatened that they would force me to eat human flesh. They then began to beat me. I signed the paper, but they did not let us go. They then brought some cooked

meat and forced us to eat. I ate a small piece and felt sick. They then gave me another paper on which they had written that the woman passenger was my sister, and that I would be selling her for a few Afghanis to them. I said I would not do that even if I was killed. They beat me for some time until their commander told them to stop. They told us to go. As we were walking down the stairs, I heard a noise from behind. I turned back and noticed that the woman was not there. I was threatened to go, otherwise I would be killed."

Another new torture method reported in recent years is near-suffocation. An Afghan refugee described to Amnesty International how an acquaintance of his had been tortured by the security personnel of Shura-e-Nezar in early 1994, "He had been a high ranking official of Shura-e-Nezar suspected by its leaders of collaborating with Dostum and Hekmatyar. He was tortured very badly. Several times he was suffocated and brought back to life. He recalled how they would tighten a rope round his neck until he was just about to die, then they would let go of him. Many prisoners have died under this form of torture."

Rape and beatings

Women and girls all over Afghanistan live in constant fear of being raped by armed guards. For years, armed guards have been allowed to torture them in this way without fear of reprimand from their leaders. In fact, rape is apparently condoned by most leaders as a means of terrorizing conquered populations and of rewarding soldiers.

Age is no barrier to the cruelty of some armed guards. A 15-year-old girl was repeatedly raped in her house in Kabul's Chelsitoon district in March 1994 by armed guards. She told Amnesty International, "They shot my father right in front of me. He was a shop-keeper. It was nine o'clock at night. They came to our house and told him they had orders to kill him because he allowed me to go to school. The Mujahideen had already stopped me from going to school, but that was not enough. They then came and killed my father. I cannot describe what they did to me after killing my father..."

The effects of such torture were graphically illustrated by several Afghan refugees when they described the plight of a young woman who lived in Shahrara district of Kabul in early 1994, "Her husband had been killed in a bomb attack. She had three children of between two and nine years old. One day she leaves her children to go and find some food. Two Mujahideen armed guards arrest her in the street and take her to their base in a house where 22 men rape her for three days. She is then allowed to go. When she reaches her home she finds her three children have died of hypothermia. She has now lost her sanity and lives in Peshawar."

Some armed guards target women from ethnic minorities they regard as enemies. The following testimony was given to Amnesty International by a 40-year-old woman who fled to Peshawar in late 1993. In Kabul, she lived in Deh Dana area, "First, the forces of Hizb-e-Islami began to fire rockets on our residential area from the Chelsitoon mountains. After that, the forces of General Dostum came to the city. They are known as Gelam Jam (carpet-takers). These guards were only looking for Pashtun people, and would not actually kill non-Pashtuns. We were not Pashtun, so at least our lives were spared... The next day armed guards of Hizb-e-Islami came to us. They carried out a lot of atrocities. For example, a number of young women in our street were raped by them. One young woman was taken away by them and a few days later her body was found somewhere in the city."

She and her family spent five days in Khair Khana. She then returned to her house, only to find that it had been looted and turned into a check-point by armed guards. The family then left Kabul for Pakistan. A few months later the woman went back to Kabul, "I went there with my father-in-law. The armed guards were still in the house. They arrested me just outside my house and took me indoors to interrogate me. They beat me in my own house telling me that I had gone to spy on them. They beat me hard on my shoulder with a rifle butt. It was very painful. They then told us to leave and never to come back."

Some women have attempted suicide to avoid being raped. Nafisa, a 25-year-old woman, reportedly threw herself off the top of a building when

armed guards came for her in mid-1993. She survived, but her back and legs were broken.

Fear of rape and other abuses has led many families to leave Kabul. A young teacher who left Kabul for Pakistan in mid-1994 told Amnesty International that her parents were frightened that she and other women in the family might be raped by members of the warring factions, "I was frightened of becoming dishonored by the armed guards, so we left Kabul. My neighbor was a middle-aged lady and had young sons. This woman was in the nearby shop when Dostum guards raided the shop. They got hold of the shopkeeper and took him away. They locked this woman in the shop for about one and a half hours. They then let her go. She came to us and told us to leave as soon as we could. She said she had been dishonored by the guards. We knew we had to leave."

Even when fleeing abuses, refugees face further terror. At various check-points, Mujahideen groups have abducted and ill-treated people who have escaped from Kabul. In the border areas near Pakistan, non-Pashtun people have been singled out, taken from their vehicles and beaten. An Afghan family who witnessed several incidents of refugees being beaten told Amnesty International, "Mujahideen guards controlling check-points between Kabul and Pakistan consider people living in Kabul to be atheists, and subject them to beatings and arbitrary killings if they cannot pay the required money."

In the recent fighting, rape and other torture have been used as widely as ever. In March 1995 Shura-e-Nezar forces reportedly carried out raids on hundreds of civilian homes in Kabul's southwestern district of Karte Seh, killing or beating whole families, looting property and raping Hazara women.

One family, interviewed by a foreign journalist in Kabul, said President Rabbani's soldiers had told them they wanted to "drink the blood of the Hazaras". Medical workers in the area confirmed at the time at least six incidents of rape and two attempted rapes, but believed the actual number was much higher.

Torture in custody

A man arrested by Shura-e-Nezar in early 1994 in Kabul told Amnesty International that he had been interrogated under torture by people from the Ministry of State Security.

He said he was then categorized by the guards as a "political prisoner" and therefore deprived of contact with other prisoners, "I was put in an isolated cell. In the interrogation room, I could hear cries of pain from cells around me.

They interrogated me by putting a picture of a person in front of me asking who he was. I did not know, so they gave me electric shocks. They brought some people from their 'committee to protect faith'.

They started a new course of torture. They put one of my testicles between a pair of pliers and crushed it. I have had severe pain since then. I was kept in that dirty room for several months. They would not take me to the toilet.

There was no water for me to wash my hands and face. One day, they hit me with a Kalashnikov rifle butt and my skull broke. Electric shocks continued to be given to my hands and feet. I was tortured there for two weeks every other night. One of my ribs was broken which healed on its own.

They kept beating me. They wanted me to say yes to everything. They said I was a political prisoner — all this meant was that I should be kept in an isolation cell. In every 24 hours they would give me 250 grams of dried bread. When I was released, my wife weighed me and I was only 48 kilograms. Normally I am 73."

In January 1994 a journalist (name withheld) living in Kabul was reportedly detained and beaten repeatedly with a rifle butt by members of Hizb-e-Wahdat.

They accused her of wanting to send information to the enemy. She was told that she would be killed because of her bias against the party.

She was then told that she would be released if she had sex with the armed guards. When she refused she was subjected to a mock execution. She was released when a large sum of money was given to the guards.

Prison sites since April 1992

Scores of prisoners in Panjshir jails have reportedly been forced to do hard labor in the lapis lazuli mines. Some former prisoners have testified that their inmates died when stones and other debris fell on them. Others were injured but survived.

Jails in provincial capitals and cities are used by the commanders and governors for imprisoning their perceived enemies, including prisoners of conscience. For example, Herat Prison, which is used by the forces of Ismael Khan, holds several hundred prisoners. The majority of these are Uzbek militia supporters of General Dostum but scores of them are reportedly unarmed civilians held simply because they are Uzbeks. Torture and beating of prisoners in these jails have been reported.

The jails run by Hizb-e-Wahdat (Mazari and Khalili) in Karte Char, Karte Seh and Dasht-e-Barchi were in operation at least until March 1995 when the group lost control of these districts. In these jails, commanders tortured prisoners and held them for long periods. Among those detained was Najmuddin Musleh, who was killed in detention in early March 1995 just before Hizb-e-Wahdat evacuated the jails. According to reports, prisoners' families were asked for large sums of money for their release. If the family could not afford to pay the ransom, the prisoner would continue to be tortured or killed.

Many of the victims were from the Pashtun or Tajik communities.

Hizb-e-Wahdat has also held prisoners for up to several weeks reportedly in large metal containers in Afshar district. The containers had been used by the Soviet army to transport relief supplies. In addition to the usual lack of toilet facilities, prisoners held in these containers suffered from poor ventilation and excessive heat or cold.

Harakat-e-Inqilab, led by Sheikh Asif Mohsini, uses Mohammad Wazir prison in Mahtab Qala, west of Kabul. Prisoners are kept there in dark rooms with wet floors. They are regularly taken to torture rooms in the same building.

The guards reportedly torture prisoners to force their families to pay ransoms. One prisoner could hardly walk when he was released after about three months in captivity in 1994 because of the torture he suffered. He told Amnesty International that he had been forced to pay 2.5 million Afghanis for his release.

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Killings by armed political groups

Women related to men sought by Mujahideen groups, or who have themselves resisted abduction or rape, have been deliberately and arbitrarily killed, sometimes in front of their families, or have been threatened with death by the warring factions.

A family who left Afghanistan in mid-1994 told Amnesty International how one night in March that year, members of General Dostum's forces had entered their house in Old Microrian area of Kabul and killed their daughter, "There were about 12 of them all carrying Kalashnikovs rifles with their faces covered. They asked us to give them our daughter. We refused. They did not accept that, and asked us to bring our daughter to talk to them. We asked her and she came and told them she did not want to go with them. One of them then lifted his Kalashnikov and shot my daughter dead in front of our eyes. She was only 20 and was just about to finish her high school. We buried her body. There were eight surviving members of our family."

An elderly couple described how their 19-year-old daughter had been killed in front of them in March 1994 because she refused to go with armed guards. The guards then looted the house and forced the family to leave.

A teacher from Kabul who left Afghanistan in mid-1992 reported how her residential area had been used as a battleground by three warring factions. She said that General Dostum's forces were in the Chelsitoon area, Shura-e-Nezar

guards occupied the main road and Hizb-e-Islami guards were on the mountainside. She recounted how she was nearly killed by the armed guards of a Mujahideen commander. Another woman who had fled to Pakistan told Amnesty International, "Heavy fighting had begun in early 1994 in the Bibi Mahroo district of Kabul. My sister-in-law had two young girls and we were worried about what might happen to them. One day, we noticed that they were missing. They had gone to the corner shop and had not returned. We searched everywhere and could not find them. Then we discovered their bodies in a ruined building. Their heads were battered, their faces swollen. We brought the bodies home and buried them there.

The fighting got heavier. We had to leave our house and take shelter in the basement of the 400-bed hospital. We kept our other daughters with us at all times. When the fighting receded, we left Kabul."

Several refugee families told the story of a woman in labor who had been taken to a hospital in Kabul by her husband one evening at about 10pm in early 1994. There was a curfew in force at the time and cars were not allowed in the streets of Kabul. Armed guards reportedly stopped the car at a checkpoint, telling the husband that they would take the woman to the hospital themselves and that he should go back home.

The next day, the husband was told at the hospital that the woman had not been taken there.

The husband went to the guards to ask where his wife was. They reportedly showed him the dead bodies of the woman and the newly-born baby, telling him that since they had only seen videos of women delivering babies, they wanted to see how a baby was delivered in real life.

Refugees who had fled from Farah province told Amnesty International the story of the wife of Zaman Shoughi, a well-known Afghan singer who was killed in early 1994. A family who had lived in the couple's neighborhood recalled, "A friend of ours was told that Zaman Shoughi had been killed by armed guards of Hezb-e-Wahdat who aimed a rocket at him outside his house.

The group then arrested his wife who had come outside to see what was going on, and asked her to give them money. She has not been heard of since."

Many women recalled how the warring factions in Kabul killed civilians living under siege who tried to collect water or buy food in early 1994. "The city's water supply had been cut during the war and we had to get the water from the few taps in the streets which were working. But we were frightened to go out. For example, I saw a 12-year-old child who had gone to get some water. He had taken a bucket with him, and was filling that bucket. The boy was hit by a bullet there. A sniper decided to kill him. Only one shot was fired. The mother ran there to collect his dead body; a second shot was fired and she was killed instantly. Their corpses were left there as no one dared collect them. Some days later, we saw stray dogs at them."

Abductions and sexual abuse by armed political groups

Scores of Afghan women have reportedly been abducted and detained by Mujahideen groups and commanders and then used for sexual purposes or sold into prostitution. Young girls have suffered the same fate.

A woman told Amnesty International that her 13-year-old niece was abducted by the armed guards of a Hizb-e-Islami commander in late 1993, "They said their commander wanted her. They took her away. She was resisting and screaming but they dragged her away. We were frightened that if we did anything we would all be killed. Several months later, the commander was killed during fighting and the girl was able to come back to her father's house. Abducting young girls has been very common in recent years. They would kill any girl who refused to go with them."

A family who had lived in Iran for five years and went back to their home in Farah province after the Mujahideen took power in April 1992, told Amnesty International how armed guards of a Jamiat-e-Islami commander entered their house in early 1994 to take their daughter for the commander, "We were a farming family. There were 10 of us in the family. One Jamiat-e-Islami commander who had three wives came with his armed guards to our house

asking to marry my sister who was 15 years old. My brother objected and told him that as a white bearded man he should not seek to marry such a young girl. But the commander's guards beat my brother. One of the guards pointed his Kalashnikov at my brother's arm and fired a shot. His shirt was covered in blood. We were forced to give my sister away."

Another family living in Darul Aman in Kabul before fleeing to Pakistan in May 1994 reported that unarmed people tried to live together as much as possible to deter attacks from armed guards. Despite this, armed guards still entered their houses and on one occasion took a young woman with them, "One late night, our houses were cordoned off by armed Mujahideen guards. This was about seven months ago [May 1994]. There were about 20 armed guards. They said they were looking for young women to take with them. Our men objected to this. They killed my husband and three other men in our house. They tied the hands of our two old men together. There were two young women in our house; they took one of them. In the morning, we buried the dead."

In May 1994 a pregnant woman was reportedly arrested in Darul Aman district of Kabul by the armed guards of Hizb-e-Wahdat. Her family has not been able to establish her whereabouts.

"She was a relative of mine. She had been arrested on her way home. We searched and searched for her and could not find her. The Mujahideen made life very difficult for women, abducting them, beating them and dishonoring them."

A school girl called Farida was reportedly taken away by the armed guards of Hizb-e-Islami in January 1993 in the "Low Cost Project" area in Kabul. A witness recalled, "A commander of Hizb-e-Islami saw her and decided to take her. The commander contacted the father and asked him to give his daughter to the commander. The family rejected this. The commander then came back in the evening with a number of armed guards and took the girl away. The family did not resist, so no one was killed. But no one knew what had happened to the girl."

A woman who had fled to Pakistan went to Kabul in October 1993 to re-establish contact with her sister who lived in Karte Sakhi district. She was detained by the armed guards on suspicion of spying for a rival faction, and was severely beaten, "We heard in Jalalabad that my nephew had been arrested by the Hizb-e-Islami and we were worried. So I went there [Kabul] with my sister-in-law. When we got there we were told that my sister had gone to Ghazni. We were returning when armed guards stopped us. They arrested us and took us to a house which they used as their base. They told us that we were spies. They showed us a number of containers in the house. They opened one of these containers and I saw that there were gouged-out eyes stuck to the sides of the container. They told us that these were the eyes of those who fought against them. I cannot tell how many there were, there could have been about 50 to 60 eyes. They told us that our eyes would be gouged out if we did not tell them who had sent us there. I swore that I was not a spy but they hit me with rifle butts on my shoulder and also on my legs. My sister-in-law was also beaten. We begged them not to beat us and told them that we did not belong to any party."

Eventually, after about six hours of interrogation, the two women were allowed to go but were told they had to find their way out of the area over the Salam hills, "We had no choice. My leg was in pain but we had to go. On top of the mountain, there was a checkpoint. A very large man came towards us. He said they had told him on the wireless that we would be going there. He again held us there for about one to one and a half hours, asking why we had gone to that area of Kabul. We were very thirsty but they did not give us any water. They beat us again. We cried and cried. Suddenly, there was an aeroplane and they ran away to take shelter. We took advantage of that and ran away from them hiding ourselves behind the rocks so we could not be seen. When we got back to Khair Khana, I sat down, and could not move after a while as my leg had begun to swell. We were unable to get a lift since the cars did not stop for women."

A family who lived in Kolola Pushta near Shahr-e-Naw district in Kabul told Amnesty International that they had left their house in 1993 when the area turned into a battleground between the then alliance of Shura-e-Nezar and

General Dostum's forces against Hizb-e-Islami. They were told a few days later that the guards had taken away dozens of Pashto speaking women from their locality. The area was reportedly captured again by a rival faction and the women were found in a house. All of them were naked. Some of the women reportedly asked the guards to kill them because they had been dishonored, but the guards reportedly let them go.

Scores of women have reportedly been forcibly taken from their families in exchange for money. Some have been taken as wives -- Mujahideen commanders have been known to marry several young women in one night. Others have been sold into prostitution.

Some party leaders and influential commanders have also reportedly forced families to sell them their young daughters and sons who are then reported to have been sold into prostitution, frequently in Pakistan and other countries.

Woman who fled Kabul in January 1994 saw armed guards whom she believed to be members of General Dostum's forces taking away young girls and boys, “I was baking bread in my flat one day when I saw armed guards entering the building complex. Some went to the basement of an apartment block and came out carrying young boys aged 12 and 13. They were screaming but the guards forced them to go with them. I saw this with my own eyes. I could not bear it any more. We had to leave. My brother (a student), my father (a university lecturer), my sister (also a student) and my mother -- we all left. We had nothing with us but our clothes. We had no money to even pay a driver to take us. There were corpses lying everywhere. No one had the time to collect the dead as the fighting never stopped.”

Refugees and the displaced

Hundreds of thousands of Afghan women have fled to Pakistan with their families, the vast majority of whom have headed for Pakistan. They were forced to bribe Shura-e-Nezar guards who stopped cars near Kabul and forced those

who appeared to be Pashtun to get out. Some armed guards were reportedly looking for Hazaras. At Hizb-e-Islami checkpoints and Khalili's Party checkpoints, guards were looking for Tajiks and Uzbeks whom they would force to leave cars. Some refugees told Amnesty International that Mujahideen guards controlling checkpoints near the border with Pakistan consider people living in Kabul to be "atheists", and consequently beat or killed them if they could not pay the required money. Once in the refugee camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan, women are still not safe. In the camps in Pakistan, most of which are controlled by one or other of the warring Afghan factions, women have been attacked, particularly those who are unaccompanied by men. If they refuse sexual favors to the Mujahideen representatives, they are often denied access to vital rations.

Traumatized by the brutality

Mothers have been forced to watch their young daughters being raped. Girls have witnessed their parents being beaten and killed. Thousands of women have had to watch helplessly as their homes were destroyed and their homes were destroyed and their loved ones brutalized. Hundreds of thousands of women have made painful treks with their children across hazardous mountainous passes in freezing conditions, only to be abused on arrival at border-posts and refugee camps. Not surprisingly, many of these women are traumatized and are in desperate need of professional help.

A woman who left Afghanistan in early 1994 witnessed a succession of human rights abuses against her family in Shindand, including the killing of her brother by the Mujahideen guards, "One night, I was in my house with my mother, my 10-year-old sister and nine-year-old brother, and my father-in-law. The armed guards attacked our house. They were on the roof. My brother picked up the lamp to see what was going on. When he reached the roof top, they shot at him. He ran away. My father-in-law went to see what was going on. He saw the men but did not climb the roof; instead he jumped into the adjacent garden. He did not come back to the house. Then the armed guards entered the house. They were Mujahideen guards. They asked us to give them our keys. We had no

choice. They then began to beat us. They beat all of us in the house. Then they took away all our belongings. Meanwhile, my brother had gone to the square to inform the people, but the guards saw him there and killed him at the square's gate."

A woman recalled the abduction of her cousin from a remote village in Farah province in 1994, "Several armed guards of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar went to my uncle's house in a village in Farah province. It was about midnight. My uncle had no money to give to them, so they took his 22-year-old son. Twenty-five days later, his body was found under a bridge. It showed a lot of bullet wounds."

Another woman described artillery attacks and heavy fighting in early 1994 in the residential area of Bibi Mahro in Kabul, "I was in my daughter's house when suddenly heavy fighting and bombing started. We did not know what to do but we could not stay in our houses. We all had to take shelter in the basement of a hospital. There were no toilets there. My daughter had four children. There was nothing to eat. We spent five days there. We were not fighters, but we could not leave the basement. My grand-daughter who was six years old was very ill. She just died there in my daughter's arms."

A couple who fled to Pakistan said that during an unexpected artillery attack in early 1994 on their residential area in Kabul, they took their youngest child to their basement, but did not have time to find their two other children. During a short lull in the bombing, they ran upstairs and found the bodies of the two children driven into the ground by the force of a bomb. The mother said, "I told people to bury them where they were as I did not know how much of them could be pulled out of that hole."

Women's rights violated with impunity

In several provinces, warlords have assumed the functions of judges; in some other provinces Islamic clergy or local Shuras (councils of elders) assume judicial functions. In some of these provinces, trials which fall far short of

internationally accepted standards of fairness have reportedly resulted in sentences involving punishments such as stoning to death and public lashings, which Amnesty International considers are cruel, inhuman or degrading and therefore opposes.

A woman reported to Amnesty International that in April and May 1994 in Karte Naw, the combined forces of Hizb-e-Islami and Hizb-e-Wahdat attacked family homes of the Panjshiris (an ethnic group) in Kabul, "They raped a lot of women. I knew a 60-year-old woman who had been raped. That same woman then went to the main commander of Hizb-e-Islami to complain, but the commander did not pay any attention."

In November 1993, three children of a Hazara family were arrested in Karte Seh but nothing has been heard about them ever since. On 20 November 1993 the house of Assadullah Wakilzadeh, who had worked as a carpenter in foreign embassies in the past, was raided by a group reportedly belonging to Jamiat-e-Islami. He resisted and was beaten unconscious; when he came round his 15-year-old son Rahmatullah had been abducted. Two days later in a similar raid, two other sons, Ahmadreza, aged 13, and Mustafa, aged 11, were abducted. After negotiations with the abductors for the release of the children had failed, the family fled Kabul. The children's whereabouts remain unknown.

In mid-1993 Mohammad Yar, a former army officer, and six of his children, the youngest of whom was eight years old, were taken away by forces of Hizb-e-Wahdat during a raid on their home in Microrian in Kabul. The remaining children could not trace the arrested family members and left Kabul a few days later.

Zia Nassiri, a journalist in his early forties, was detained in Kabul by forces allegedly belonging to Jamiat-e-Islami on 2 October 1992. His family has not been able to trace him since his detention.

WOMEN IN AFGHANISTAN: A human rights catastrophe
AI Index: ASA 11/03/95

Following the occupation of Kabul University by the Shia party, Hizb-e-

Wahdat Islami, and the appointment by this party of Hussain Amiri as the university's rector, almost all university lecturers and their families are believed to have left Kabul.

The University is reportedly still closed and neither the government nor Hizb-e-Wahdat Islami have managed to provide adequate safety to allow students to enroll and for lecturers to return to their posts.

Armed groups belonging to Hizb-e-Wahdat Islami have reportedly looted books and equipment from the university library, while armed groups belonging to Shura-e-Nezar of Ahmad Shah Massoud have looted the library of the Academy of Science in Kabul. Books have been reportedly sold to bulk paper traders in Pakistan to produce recycled paper.

Continued fighting in Hazara areas in Kabul has reportedly made it difficult for journalists to cover the situation. In at least one case in February 1993, government troops are reported to have taken side with members of the Sunni party Ittihad-e-Islami (Sayyaf) against members of the Shia party Hizb-e-Wahdat Islami. The fighting reportedly spread into the Afshar residential areas in Kabul. Government troops reportedly killed unarmed Shia civilian men in front of their families, and raped women and set Shia homes on fire. These attacks were reportedly in retaliation for earlier attacks by Shia activists against people in areas of Kabul controlled by the Sunni party.

Political crisis and the refugees of AFGHANISTAN
AI Index: ASA 11/01/93

Amnesty International has received reports that on 7 September 1992 three men, Sayed Sikander, Mohammad Gul and Mohammad Rafit, were publicly hanged in Kabul after an Islamic court had found them guilty of robbery, looting and murder, and sentenced them to death. According to reports in the international press, the public had had no access to the trials.

The three men apparently had had no right to appeal against their sentence to a higher court or to seek pardon. A government spokesman declared that further executions may follow as similar cases were pending in court.

Defense Ministry spokesman Younis Qanooni declared, their deaths served as an example to others and were necessary to restore law and order in the capital.

Some days later, on 27 May, Deputy Minister of Justice in the Mujaddedi government, Abdul Rahim, told an international news agency in an interview that under Islamic law, which had now replaced all other laws, adultery would be punished with stoning to death and offenders convicted of theft would have a hand or a foot severed. The consumption of alcohol would be punished with 80 lashes, while the death penalty may be imposed for trading in alcohol.

New forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment in Afghanistan
AI Index: ASA 11/02/1992

Destruction of Criminals in Residential Areas

Most of the victims were unarmed women and children. Between 21 and 24 October at least 95 people were killed and over 290 wounded in bombardments aimed solely at residential areas where there was no military activity.

Artillery and mortar fire around Kabul University, the Deh Mazang area and the so-called Television Mountain the same month killed at least 45 people and wounded 150. Eye-witnesses reported that one of the bombs hit a school which was being used as a shelter for displaced people, killing 10. On 12 March President Rabbani's soldiers reportedly rampaged through Karte Seh, looting houses, killing and beating unarmed civilians, and raping women.

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5

PAYAM-E-ZAN

(Women's Message)
A publication of the Revolutionary Associaton
of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA)

Reports of crimes, atrocities
and brutalities of the fundamentalists

پیام زن
نشریه جمعیت انقلابی زنان افغانستان

Jehadis' Crimes

According to General Zahin (a former Parchami, currently deputy defense minister and technical in charge of the same ministry) around 1800 vehicles were stolen by Mujahideen in recent violence. Most of them were plundered by Hezb-e-Wahdat and Shura-e-Nezar's men.

In mid-May in Taimani's Moe Mubarak area, Hezb-e-Wahdat's men entered a house at night which belonged to a Hindu family. They killed four members of the family and looted al their belongings and possessions.

On June 12, 1992 Hezb-e-Wahdat's men stole all antique possessions from two souvenir shops and 280 television sets in Torbaz Khan Square in Shahr-e-Naw.

Hezb-e-Wahdat's men kidnapped a girl from Street 13 of Wazir Akbar Khan and took her to their post. After raping her they made her dance. Jalaluddin Haqqani and Shura-e-Nezar's men attacked the post, apparently to defend the girl but actually to get her. The rocket attack on the post resulted in the destruction of one story of the building and death of the girl.

On June 19, 1992, thirty members of Hezb-e-Wahdat armed with rockets and other weapons were surrounded by Rashid Dostum's forces in Ali Riza Khan Street. In the clashes between them, an apartment was set on fire, four people were burnt, six were injured and twenty others were arrested. In retaliation, Hezb-e-Wahdat attacked center of Kabul with Sakar rockets and missiles killing 100 innocent people and injuring more than 50.

According to reliable reports, more than 130 girls and 50 boys have been kidnapped in Kabul city. It is said that most of the kidnappings were carried out by Sayyaf's Ittihad-e-Islami in order to make money by selling these young people to Arabs for whom he was working.

On the night of July 28, 1992 armed men entered the house of a man in the 2nd Sector of Karte Parwan, forced both the husband and his wife into a Jeep and left the area. Their small children were left alone and till today there is no news about their parents' whereabouts.

On Thursday August 1, two armed men of a militia robbed a man who was taking his child to a doctor on the main road of Karte Naw. The man, who was left with no money, couldn't take his child to the doctor and the child died at

night because of his very bad condition. Next morning the family left the area.

Hundreds of women and children were killed in the fighting between Gulbuddin and Dostum's men in Karte Naw. 14 young girls were also kidnapped by Hezb-e-Islami and nobody had any confirmed information about their location.

In the clashes which took place between Hezb-e-Wahdat and Ittihad-e-Islami in Chelsitoon, Hezb-e-Wahdat entered people's houses for hiding. They held women and children hostage. Later they cut off the women's breasts because they were Sunni and then left the area.

Robbery and kidnapping

At night on June 22, 1992, an armed group that belonged to Gulbuddin's party entered a retired major's house situated in Syed Noor Mohammad Shah Mina, killed two of his sons, wounded him and stole all his belongings. A few nights later, Gulbuddin's armed men entered Mohammad Isa's residence, a retired army officer in Karte Naw, and demanded money and jewelry. The family pleaded that they didn't have money but it was in vain. They took Isa's 15-year-old daughter instead.

Mr. Yasir is the "pimp" or our people?

On July 23, 1992, during a speech in the ministry, "Yasir", the minister of civil construction from Sayyaf's party, called his colleagues and the people who let their wives go to work in industries and offices "pimps". In other words anyone letting his wife work outside was a pimp. At that moment when the anger of the female employees reached its climax, one of the women stood and cut into the minister's speech by saying, "Dear minister, you should know this fact that during the 14 years of Jehad women have experienced a lot of misery, many of them have lost their beloved husbands, their brothers or sons. Therefore women have no other option but to work in order to feed their families. I think you have no idea what pimping is about. People who have taken

ministries and dozens of important government offices, leaving their wives behind in Pakistan in order to please their Arab and Pakistani bosses are pimps." The woman went away immediately after saying these words and no one knew where she went.

Jehadi beasts and our Hindu countrymen

In June, 1992, in Taimani and Karte Parwan a number of armed men attacked the Hindu residential areas and especially the Sikhs, who were mostly merchants by profession. They not only robbed them but also raped their women and performed circumcision on a number of them. Those poor Sikhs were yelling at them, by the God and Quran that you people believe in, have some respect for our religious beliefs and attributes. After that incident, the Afghan Hindus queued in front of the Indian Embassy in groups to leave the country. A number of them sold their shops at half price and some of them didn't even wait to sell their belongings and simply went straight back to India.

Jehadis left behind the Russians and their puppets in crimes

On June 23, 1992, near Kabul's Municipality, two young girls were crying depressively. When the people nearby approached them to find out the matter, one of the girls told them, "Just a few minutes ago a vehicle loaded with armed men stopped us and forcefully dragged our sister into their car and went away in a flush. I don't know where they took our sister and what her crime was. She was even veiled like us. What should we do now and what should we tell our parents? Which door should we knock for help? Oh my God! What evil He has brought on us! Is this the gift of an Islamic government? To attack the dignity of people in daylight?" Among the crowd a man spoke loudly saying, "Sister! Rape and crushing the dignity of the people has no time frame. These wild beasts attack people whenever they feel hungry for sex. I swear by God, Russians and their puppets never attacked our life and honor like this, they are surely leading

from the front…" In the meantime a number of armed men came and asked about the issue. The people told them, and as expected those armed men without showing any concern said, "They are militias." People told them, "These men are all armed and each other's rivals and it's not even clear to which party they belong." The armed men asked the people to disperse because it was none of their business and that they would follow the case. They asked the girls to go with them and left the crowd.

Payam-e-Zan, Issue No. 29-30 (August 1992)

Dog fights and the massacre of people

From 4th to 8th December 1992, bloody clashes occurred in different areas of Kabul including Chand Awal, Deh Mazang, Pameer Cinema, Bagh-e-Bala, Taimani, and Afshar. These clashes occurred between Wahdat Party and Shura-e-Nezar. Dostum militias also joined the fighting in favor of the Wahdat Party. In these clashes heavy armor were mostly used. As a result the homes of innocent people and government facilities became the targets of rocket and cannon shells. A number of apartments that had been left intact during the previous few attacks of Gulbuddin were also damaged. Shura-e-Nezar explained the reason for the clashes as being the kidnapping of one of its commanders, Hameed Gul.

Dostum militias killed 15 supporters of Rabbani in one the clashes inside the presidential palace. Later on they were arrested and disarmed. In another fighting, after the killing of 30 men of the Shura-e-Nezar and then the outbreak of this news, all the check posts surrounding Microrian and Bala Hesar fell into the hands of militias. Militias robbed the belongings of people and raped women during these attacks. This clash left behind 2,500 killed and wounded. The majority of the wounded passed away either due to lack of medicine or medical staff. A number of ICRC ambulances were on the roads to carry the wounded and dead. Massoud immediately brought 15,000 men from Shamali for backup they settled in the Khair Khana mosques.

On 5th December more than 20 residents of Karte Mamoorine who had queued in front of a bread shop were hit by the rockets and cannon shells of Shura-e-Nezar. They died on the spot.

On November 30th, the militia of Dostum, taking advantage of the fighting in Kabul city, robbed more than three shops including famous shops like Sher Agha (more famously known as Haji Bashi), Qadeer Limited and Anar Dara's Generator Firm.

There were more than 40 military check posts in the Kabul-Mazar Highway and they each charged 2,000 to 10,000 rupees.

Beating for a musical instrument

A commander of one of the military checkpoints of Sayyaf along the Kabul-Shamali Highway told a driver to bring him a Tanboor (a three string musical instrument) on his way back. The driver managed to get hold of a Tanboor but he was stopped at another checkpoint and they took it from him and broke it in pieces. When he returned empty handed he was beaten by the commander of the first checkpoint till the passengers confirmed to the commander the events on the way.

The checkpoint staff usually ordered the drivers to bring them items like jackets, shoes, cloths and other things and obviously they never bothered to pay for it.

Payam-e-Zan, Issue No. 31-32 (January 1993)

Hit my mouth for it prayed for you

A person was walking across one of the checkpoints of Shura-e-Nezar in Kabul, when suddenly a rocket hit the ground a few yards away from him, probably fired by Gulbuddin's party or Wahdat Party. The person got very mad and started abusing in a loud voice and said, "If you people cannot handle the government it is better to leave it like Najeeb and let those come who are qualified and can run the country." Meanwhile, an armed man of Shura-e-Nezar heard the man, ran towards him and started beating him. The man who got beaten by that armed man on his back said, "My back is not responsible; hit me on the mouth because it prayed for you people to come to power."

Jehadis the Mafias

In January 1993, the Jehadis in phase one of Khair Khana, kidnapped a 16-year old boy, Muhammad Bakhsh son of Faiz Bakhsh, famous by the nickname of "millionaire".

They asked the father of the boy to pay them $50,000 in return for his son's life. Faiz Bakhsh, who was incapable of paying such an enormous amount, agreed to pay 500,000 Afghanis during a telephone conversation. Meanwhile, another Jehadi group came to know about the issue and on the same evening entered the Faiz Bakhsh residence.

After beating him and tying his hands and feet asked him to give the money to them.

While the family members including his young daughters were trying to stop the armed men from hitting their father, the elder son of Faiz Bakhsh by the name of Muhammad Rahim suddenly entered the home and got involved in the fight with them. With a knife he was able to inflict some minor injuries to a couple of the men, but got killed by one of them who was armed with a Kalashnikov.

Later on they left Muhammad Bakhsh and went away.

Next morning another call came for Faiz Bakhsh, but this time it was from one of the senior Jehadi authorities, and he wanted to know about the issue. Faiz Bakhsh said, "They kidnapped one of my sons and killed my elder one, leaving his wife widow and his children orphan.

They took the money that I had earned after so much effort and insulted and beat me in front of my family. This is the result of all those prayers we gave in support of the Mujahideen and its Islamic government.

Today I see the crimes and sins they commit under the name of Islam with my own eyes.

Now we understand that the real martyred were only those who gave their blood for the country or were kidnapped by these wild gangs and disappeared."

After the funeral of Muhammad Rahim, the kidnappers dropped the boy near his home because they knew that the hapless father was no longer in a position to give them even a cent.

Escape of Gulbuddini bastards

Shafiqa, a kindergarten teacher tells her story as such, "It was Sunday March 12, 1993, at 10 o'clock, four armed men from the Islamic Party of Gulbuddin entered our home. That night we had some guests at home. My husband Rasool told the thieves to take anything they wanted but not to bother the females. The armed men, while firing at the hall, went towards the room where the women were. But the men from our side showed resistance and fought with them empty handed. While trying to protect our honor and dignity, my husband got injured during the firing and my brother-in-law Ameen (who was 23 and had recently got engaged) got killed. It looked like the armed men wanted to take Haseena, my sister-in-law. But due to the fight put up by my husband and his brother they couldn't get what they wanted and escaped while the neighbors came to our rescue."

Innocent Nahid's blood

On the night of February 9,1993, some armed Jehadis entered the home of Abdul Hameed in apartment number18, block 16 of 3rd Microrian. They wanted to kidnap Nahid, his 14-year old daughter. The girl had understood the malicious plan of the Jehadi thieves. While her father and other family members argued with the Jehadis in order to save her honor, she went to the balcony and jumped. She died on the spot.

The next day, people of the area organized a demonstration while carrying her coffin. After half an hour some armed men reached the scene and started shooting continuously, scattering the protesters. The next day, General Fahim, director of the secret services of the Islamic government, came to Nahid's father with some money and wanted to heal the family's pain with the money; but one of the women of Nahid's household threw the money on Fahim's face and said, "Give this money to your wild men

so that they don't target and rape people." Shura-e-Nezar's men held Dostum's men responsible but Dostum's men claimed that the area was controlled by Shura-e-Nezar.

Connection of Arab and Pakistani fundamentalists with Gulbuddin

As a result of the fighting between Jamiat and Gulbuddin's party that took place in January and February of 1993, majority of the inhabitants of the Chelsitoon to Guzargah area left their homes and became immigrants.

The fighting was so intense that people could not carry the injured ones to the hospital and they had to burry the dead bodies inside their homes or in the streets.

The witnesses who had passed by the Pul-e-Artal said that some of the dead bodies remained on the streets for many days. Some of them were eaten by dogs.

The homes of the people in the regions of Chelsitoon to Jangalak Factory that were destroyed and evacuated as a result of the shelling between Gulbuddin's party and Jamiat, were turned into military bases of the parties.

A large number of Arabs and Pakistanis who participated in the battle in support of Gulbuddin were seen in the bases by the people of the area.

Jehadi torture

Last summer, commander Ameer accused a peasant of stealing a few meters of cloth. This peasant was a resident of Nek Paa village of Qunduz. On the command of Maulawi Noor Baig they cut his hand off and stuck the stump of his arm in a bowl full hot oil to stop the bleeding.

Then they hung the cut hand in a cross road to warn the people from doing such acts.

It is also worthy to mention that many peasants from the area of Ali Abad were also being punished in inhumane ways by the same cleric.

Gulbuddin's way of killing

On November 5, 1992, a 23-year old boy named Islamuddin, a native of Rustaq District situated in Takhar province, who had been living with his family in Qunduz province for many years, was kidnapped and killed by members of Gulbuddin's party.

After killing him his body was thrown into a furnace that belonged to Abdul Hai.

Islamuddin's family found his body after a long search and buried him.

Revenge of Sayyaf's party and bloodshed by Mazari

In Kabul the wounded usually died due to lack of blood supply.

The armed men of Shura-e-Nezar armed men arrested Hazaras they found on roads.

They took them to special facilities and after taking 1000cc of blood freed them only if they had not committed any other "crime".

On the other hand the Hezb-e-Wahdat party indulged in another horrific act. After every war they counted the number of their dead and arrested the same number of innocent people (including women and children) of the opposite side and hung them to death.

From the fire of civil wars

On May 13, 1993, at 4 o'clock the Textile Afghan Co-operation located at Maiwand Street burst into flames after it was hit by rockets.

The fire brigades couldn't stop the fire for three days.

In this fire all the important documents of the co-operation including the statements of many years turned into ashes.

On the same day, the apartment of Afzal Market in front of Pul-e-Khishti mosque owned by Saeed Anwar got totally damaged and its goods were robbed.

Victims of Shura-e-Nezar and Hezb-e-Islami dog fighting

Bashir, one of the residents of Agha Ali area of Kabul tells the tragic story of his lost property, "On February 4, 1993, a terrible fight occurred in our area between Shura-e-Nezar and Wahdat Party. My family took shelter in the basement of a next door neighbor's house.

For 14 days of the freezing winter we stayed there. Eight more families joined us in that shelter. When the clashes calmed down a bit, I got an opportunity to get some food from my place for my children who were very hunger.

When I reached my place I saw my house had been turned to dust. Two rockets had struck the house and our belongings had been looted.

After a lot of effort I was finally able to get some potatoes out of the rubble and I cooked it on a fire for my children. The next day I was able to get my family to my relative's place in Shah Shaheed. At the moment I have nothing in life except the clothes that I have on. I haven't told my wife as yet."

Payam-e-Zan, Issue No. 33-34 (July 1993)

From Kabul "Schools"

Whatever I am going to write now about the Ustad Khalili School of Khair Khana is a mirror image of almost all the schools in Kabul. Everything has been robbed from this school, from chalk to chairs to blackboard. The classrooms have been turned into shelters for those families who have lost their homes in some part of Kabul due to rocket strikes.

Two or three families are living in every classroom. Teachers come to their duty for a couple of hours and due to lack of space and no teaching program ask the children to go back home after an hour or so. During the "teaching" there is so much noise caused by families that the children cannot grasp a thing the teacher is trying to explain to them.

There is always quarrelling between the teachers and children on one side and families on the other side. Families tell the teachers to ask the Education

Ministry either to build another school somewhere else or build their homes which have been destroyed in their clashes.

After two months, it was announced that exams were going to be conducted but neither the children nor the teachers knew whether it was a term exam or finals, or when the new session was going to start.

During the one and a half year of the Islamic government, there was not a single family that was not worried about the education of their children besides thousand other miseries and pain. The negative effects these schools were leaving behind on the education of children are not going to wane in years to come.

Women get kicked off from religious ceremony

On August 25, 1993, in the state accounting of Kabul, a ceremony was held to end the Holy Quran. A number of employees including women gathered in the hall to attend the ceremony. The vice chairman of the Mustufiat, who was a Jehadi and had recently been posted to this ministry, entered the hall. Right away with an insulting tone, deep anger and madness he said to the female employees, "Who has asked you to attend this ceremony? This is not the type of place you should be in. You people don't even know where to go and participate; you have no right to attend such a holy ceremony. I order you all to leave this place immediately and go to your offices or homes." The poor ladies who were boiling in anger and hatred had no other choice but to leave the hall quietly.

Jehadi tolls

In the third week of August, armed men kidnapped Mohammad Farooq from Shahr-e-Aara and demanded 300 lacs from his relatives. The relatives collected the amount and according to the order of the kidnappers, delivered the money to a chemist in Shahr-e-Naw. After a while a man called Humayoun came along with his armed men to collect and transfer the money. Suddenly they were surrounded by General Baba Jan's men. Shooting started between them resulting in Humayoun's death and the detention of the rest of his men with the money.

Murder and looting by Jehadis

On November 19, 1993 in Bamyan province, a poor peasant who had some disagreements with his cousin was arrested by Commander Hussain Ali's men on the charge of murder and booty on the night of his wedding. Hussain Ali's men had already taken money from his cousin. They took the peasant to their Almas headquarter that night and hung him to death the next morning. I was crossing the area in my car when I saw his dead body hanging on the pole.

Hussain Ali and his armed men forced the people of the area to fulfill all their expenses. In the name of "money for God's way", in other words Zakat, share and tax they took money from the people. For example one day they asked a poor peasant Sayed Haider to give Zakat. But he said he had nothing to eat, from where should he give money in the name of God. People confirmed his poor status. Then they noticed his wrist watch and said if you have nothing then give us your watch, and they took it off his wrist. In the same manner whatever new thing this group found with someone they took it by force.

Women in the hold of Hezb-e-Wahdat

On September 15, 1993, a few women were seen under the trees of Bagh-e-Bala with torn clothes. They said, "We have escaped from the prison of Hezb-e-Wahdat.

Like us there are hundreds of women in their custody. Most of the young girls have become pregnant and their sorrows need no explanation."

Jehadi killings and unchaste behavior

On Saturday, September 18, 1993, Jehadis that belonged to Jamiat-e-Islami kidnapped a young girl from Khair Khana. After raping her they cut her into pieces to hide her identity. They threw her dead body in the Khair Khana Park.

Jehadi deal

In November, 1993, members of Shura-e-Nezar bought a house in a street beside Khair Khana Park. They paid the money to the owner and received the contract. But on the same night they entered the house, killed the owner and took back the money.

A failed Jehadi abduction

On November 18, 1993, in Shahr-e-Naw of Kabul, an armed group held two young women by their hands and feet, trying to drag them to their military base. The women were shouting, "For God's sake save us."

The people who watched the scene came together and encircled the kidnappers and saved the two innocent women from the hold of the treacherous Jehadis. The two women said that a few days back the group had kidnapped a woman from that area and raped her.

Shredding of two cotton–beaters

In late August, a rocket fired by Gulbuddin's men hit block 146 of 3rd Microrian and killed two cotton-beaters who were busy in their job.

Shukria's Story

Shukria, the mother of four children, daughter of Ali Mardan, wife of a director in the Education Ministry and resident of Shahr-e-Aara, owned a tailoring shop called *Your Tailoring* in Kabul's Kolola Pushta area.

On June 9, 1993 she was on her way to buy

bread in Shahr-e-Aara when suddenly a group of Jehadi gunmen threw her in their car like a light weight object and disappeared in the twinkling of an eye. The family searched for her but found no clue of her. 55 days later her half-naked blood stained body was found in Khair Khana.

Crimes of Shura-e-Nezar's Bashir

On August 4, 1993 at 11 am Bashir, a former commander of Gulbuddin's Hezb-e-Islami and currently member of Shura-e-Nezar, killed Baba Jan, son of Jamiatullah, accusing him of purchasing a Stinger missile.

On Septmber 3, 1993 Abdul Ahad, one of Commander Bashir's head men who was from Dahna village in Kulaab of Tajikistan, arrived in that area and stole 6 horses and 12 sheep.

The Russians attacked many villages with heavy weapons which resulted in the destruction of many places including Lace Raghi, Kamar Baloch and Farsangai. A number of people were killed, driving others to leave their homes.

Baydel, a farmer from Qezelblaq village of the same district, was detained several times by the former regime. He was robbed by Commander Bashir.

The farmer was forced to run away. He left his horses and two pair of ox to his father-in-law.

Strike in Bakhtar News Agency

On Tuesday, September 14, 1993, Abdul Hafeez, a journalist in the Bakhtar News Agency was kidnapped by some armed men of Dostum's group on the excuse of not printing the newspaper according to their desire.

He was tortured by them and later freed. After this incident the employees of Bakhtar went on strike.

The Kabul Radio Television telecast old news of previous nights again and again as they couldn't get news. "Mujahid" magazine put the responsibility of this act on the shoulders of Gulbuddin.

Payam-e-Zan, Issue No. 35-36 (January 1994)

Stoning

During the soviet invasion in Afghanistan, a girl was engaged to a man in Suroobi District. Before their marriage, her fiancé had joined the Gulbuddin Party and disappeared for a long time and then the news of his death came to his family. The family held his funeral and permitted the girl to marry someone else if she wanted. Later the girl married before Hezb-e-Islami came to power. When the Jehadis seized power, the girl's ex-fiancé also came to the district. His family told him about his death news and the marriage permission they had given to the girl but he did not accept it.

On May 24, 1992, after 1 o'clock in the afternoon he and his friends stoned the innocent and girl, who was pregnant at the time, near the Suroobi River. On August 23, 1993, about 10,000 people came together in Speenzar Ground in Qunduz where according to the order of Islamic government a 35-year old woman named Seema was to be stoned to death. After a few minutes a car came and the woman was brought forward. Then one of Sayyaf's commanders named Mohammad Arif told the people, "All of you pick up the stones and stone this woman to death who has committed shameful acts." The woman shouted that she be given the permission to say a few words but Omed Chaghi, one of the commanders of Sayyaf's party, slapped her and said she had no right to speak. The woman was shouting and saying, "If I have committed a sin, then where is the person who has done this to me?"

Fearing they would be exposed, the two commanders (Omed Chaghi and Arif) who had raped the woman were not letting the victim raise her voice. One of the Arab chiefs for Sayyaf took the first stone and hit Seema on the head. While being stoned, she moaned and said her last words, "Stone these two commanders who raped me," and was buried under the stones.

Corpses at home

In the area of Karte Seh, a bomb was dropped on a home when a 14-year old child and his parents were running towards the basement to save themselves from the rocket shelling and bombardment. They got buried under

the rubble. The neighbors succeeded in saving two other children of the same family after one and a half days under the wreckage. They were found unconscious.

Militias

During the days when there was fighting between "government" forces from one side and Gulbuddin and his allies from the other, a resident of Kabul who had already sent his family to a safer region, was in his home as watchman. When the war intensified, the man decided to leave the place and join his family.

On the way he got caught up by the Dostum militias who said, "Hurry up, give us 200,000 Afghanis otherwise we will kill you."

The man anxiously said that he had no money at the moment.

The militias told each other, "The man is lying, start beating him."

After lots of torture they carried him to an old building in Shahr-e-Kohna of Kabul which was the slaughter house of militias. When they reached the place, the man suddenly noticed the dead bodies of neighbors and some men he had some acquaintance with. Terrified, he begged the militias to accompany him to his home which was located nearby and take anything they wanted. The militias agreed and went with him to his home and after looting all his belongings, freed him.

Rape

A family from Paktia province who lived in Karte Parwan had a 16-year old daughter. One night some of the armed men entered their house and locked up her father and mother in a room.

Her father resisted and her mother begged in vain. The Jehadis killed the girl after raping her, and then escaped.

The next morning the parents buried their only beloved one in the yard.

And now the "Reconciliation Union"!

At 5 o'clock, on January 1, 1994, war started again in Kabul. The "Reconciliation Union" comprising the Northern Forces under Rasheed Dostum, Gulbuddin's party, Wahdat Party, men allied to Sibghatullah Mujaddedi and Dastgeer Panjshiri made a front on one side and the forces of Jamiat-e-Islami of Rabbani, Ahmed Shah Massoud's Shura-e-Nezar and Sayyaf were on the other side.

On the same day, Mandayi shops, Jadae Maiwand, Jadae Nadir Pashtoon supermarkets and people's residential places were looted by the Jehadis, and then set on fire.

The belongings of people in residential areas of Shah Shaheed and Karte Naw whose owners migrated due to the fear of bombardments and rocket strikes were taken in booty by Gulbuddin' party and the forces allied to Dostum.

The "Reconciliation Union" had already announced that they would come to power till noon on the first day of war.

They targeted the residential homes of unfortunate Kabul locals with their rockets and cannons. In retaliation to these events the government forces also started shelling the residential areas with heavy arms. Due to the strikes from both sides, 80 percent of the damage to the city was focused on residential areas.

Worse than death and mourning

In the second week of the current clashes, a woman got killed in one of the apartments of Microrian by a rocket. When the shelling of bullets and rocket intensified, the family members could not get the corpse out of the apartment. The dead body remained inside the apartment for three days and got putrid and rotten. On the third day the husband of the woman asked the neighbors to help him take the corpse out of the house. Six men from the neighborhood responded to his call and began digging a grave near the apartment.

They all were busy digging the grave when suddenly another rocket hit the spot where all seven of them stood and sent their body pieces flying in the air.

On May 15, 1994, in Dogh Abad of Chaardehi, a pregnant woman with one child in her arms and two others on her sides, was carrying some flour on her

head and some her children held in their hands. They were walking towards their home in Bibi Mahro. When they reached Sehat-e-Aama, a bullet from somewhere hit the miserable woman.

She immediately fell on the ground. Her terrified and unlucky children were screaming and crying on her bloody body.

After a few minutes the Red Cross employees arrived on the scene and carried the women with her kids to the nearby hospital but unfortunately she died on the way.

Kabul's Hospitals

The Gynecological and Obstetric Malalai Hospital has been out of operation after the recent clashes. It is suffering from lack of staff, and is accepting only obstetric patients who do not need to be admitted. This hospital has experienced heartbreaking incidents during the recent fighting. Lots of pregnant ladies have miscarried after hearing various shocking news, and as they had no financial backup and were unable to buy medicine had either passed away or gotten related medical complications.

According to one of the doctors of the hospital, during operations they used a candle and spirit lamp for lighting. Even that is added to the patient's bill. As there are no in-patient wards, they keep an O.R. patient a few hours in the recovery room for monitoring and then discharger her. A person who got no help trying to take his wife to deliver in the hospital amid rocket attacks tells his tale, "When I wanted to take my wife back home in the taxi, I saw two women in excruciating pain wanting to leave the hospital.

By chance they were also going to the same area as us, I asked them to come with us and we moved. On that day lots of rockets were being fired and the poor ladies were getting more cramps with every fire of a rocket. It was few minutes after we left when my wife started to have intense contractions and her water broke. I asked one of the women to help her. At the same time those ladies also started to scream in pain.

As there was no space in the taxi, we stopped on the side of the street where they delivered their babies."

General Baba Jan and "Shura-e-Nezar"

On March 22, 1994 in Deh Kepak of Khair Khana's 1st section, heavy fighting took place between Shura-e-Nezar's 11th security post and General Baba Jan's armed men. This destroyed several residences and killed many passers-by. The reason behind the fighting was that a Russian dog owned by Haq Parast, one of Shura-e-Nezar's commanders, had bitten General Baba Jan's nephew on the foot.

Kidnapped Momena Maqbool

On October 2, 1994, a 10-year old girl called Momena Maqbool was among the immigrants of Kabul living in one of the tents in Sar-e-Pul of Shibirghan province. She was kidnapped by one of the commanders of Dostum. Despite the matter and perpetrator being known to everyone, every night the Shibirghan TV broadcast news declaring the commander free of the crime. There is no further information about that innocent girl.

Raping boys

On March 6, 1993 some officers of the Brigade of Tank related to the 1st Battalion of a Jehadi group kidnapped a 16-year old boy from Qambar Square and took him to their post. After a month when he was released, he said that every night a few Jehdis raped him.

Afshar, a region of souls

On February 11, 1993 Khoshhal Mina and Central Seelo areas were set free from Hezb-e-Wahdat's control but were captured by Shura-e-Nezar and Sayyaf's Ittihad. The residents of Afshar were targeted during the fighting and after the defeat of the Wahdat forces by Shura-e-Nezar and Ittihad. After some

time when Hezb-e-Wahdat recaptured Afshar, the people who had fled returned to their homes and discovered mass graves and human bones in the streets and in the yards of their houses. Wells smelled bad because dead bodies had been dumped into them.

Crimes of Sayyafies

On the night of Monday, April 25, 1993, 12 men of Sayyaf's forces raided a house in Parwan-e-Sewom and raped a newly married woman, and then killed her husband in front of her eyes. Her name was Zarghoona. She was taken to a hospital and underwent a long surgery but couldn't survive because of severe blood loss and abdominal injuries.

Crimes of Shura-e-Nezar

During one of the days of fighting between Shura-e-Hamahangi and the government, two women fearing rocket shells left their homes and took shelter in a mosque in Khair Khana. It was very cold and they didn't have any food or warm clothes for themselves or their children. They decided to go home to retrieve food and clothes. Close to their home they were stopped by Shura-e-Nezar's men but they resisted. Shura-e-Nezar's men took them to their post and gang raped them. The next day the women's mutilated and naked bodies were found in one of the streets of Shahr-e-Kohna near their homes.

Crimes of Hezb-e-Wahdat

In September 1993, two groups of Hezb-e-Wahdat (Shafi Dewana's group and a group of Wahdatis who had come from Mazar) fought with each other resulting in the killing and injuring of several people.

After an hour Shafi Dewana came with an armed group with tanks. They fired RPG-7 rockets aimlessly, killing some people and injuring several others.

Naseer Microb was a notorious commander of Hezb-e-Wahdat. A prisoner who had spent some time in the man's prison talked about what he had witnessed, "Naseer Microb had occupied a house which belonged to a resident of Kabul and used it as his post. He had made a timetable for torturing. Every day each prisoner was tortured for two hours. Each room of the house had shelves and each prisoner was kept in one of them. The shelves were numbered and some days none of us were allowed to even go to the toilet."

Abdul Ali Mazari's prison

Qalal Khana was one of Hezb-e-Wahdat's horrific prisons located in Dasht-e-Barchi.

The prisoners in this prison were detained because of different accusations against them and had to bear deadly tortures. The bodies of those who died under torture were thrown to the dogs.

Mazari had three prisons in Karte Seh and personally tortured and executed particular prisoners he was interested in.

Malem Qayum and his sisters

On the night of April 11, 1994, a group of armed men entered Malem Qayum's residence and killed him. Two of his sisters who strongly resisted were badly wounded and are still in a comma.

Spotting Martyrs

The people of Kabul buried their murdered family members and relatives on roadsides, main roads, compounds, streams and bazaars close to their homes.

Every few steps where a person's blood had been shed, passers-by would spot it by placing a stone.

Looting of the National Gallery

On May 3, 1994 guards belonging to Shura-e-Nezar stole 19 antique art pieces, enamel and carvings and 9 paintings from the National Gallery.

Looting by Said Kayan's son

The security post of the 18th Battalion was located in the Hairatan Square in the Mazar-e-Sharif - Kabul Highway. In this post, Said Kayan's son charged drivers and passengers 20 to 70 thousand Afghanis each.

There were security posts on both sides of the highway belonging to different bands and they also charged drivers and passengers in the name of tax or toll.

The Mazar-Kabul Highway like all other highways in the country was not safe. Apart from robbing people of their money, their personal belongings were also taken from them.

They didn't even refrain from dishonoring and raping people. For example once Shura-e-Nezar's men dragged a woman from a car near southern Salang and took her with them. No one heard of her again.

Wedding party of Traitors

The wedding party of the brother of Haider Pahlawan Jawzjani, Dostum's business partner, was organized at a time when Junbihs's "Sher Arab" was attacking people's homes with heavy weapons in Samarqand and Charsang. But Pahlawan and people like Kamal, Rasool, Ghafar, Lal and others were showering dancers with dollars. The wedding party continued for more than a week. Only on the day of Nikah (signing the marriage contract in presence of a Muslim clergyman) 700 Chapans (a traditional long coat which costs between 20 to 50 thousand Afghanis) were distributed as gifts to the participants. Musical bands, dancers and wrestlers were showered with dollars and Afghanis by the commanders. The last part of the ceremony was a swimming competition. When

the Pahlawans (commanders in the North usually called themselves Pahlawan) arrived, the competition started with gun shots. Pahlawan and his friends were showering the swimmers with dollars and enjoying the competition.

In early September 1993, Dostum organized his brother Abdul Qadir Dostum's wedding party. In this ceremony which lasted for a week, guests were invited from Turkey, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and all the provinces of the country. Dancers and other actors performed. Instead of Afghanis, dollars and gold were gifted to the participants. A drum player was awarded 300 thousand Afghanis.

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Unchaste crimes of the Jehadis

Due to the recent bombardments in Kabul, Syed Anwar with his wife,13-year old son and 16-year old daughter, took refuge in the Tagab Camp situated in Samarkhel District. On August 14, 1994, a group of Gulbuddin's armed men led by Bombard and Noorullah entered their tent. They tied Noorullah and his wife with a rope, taped their daughter's mouth and raped her. They took their son with them in a Toyota car that was brought for this purpose. The car was stopped at the main gate of Samarkhel by some other armed men and Bombard and Noorullah were captured. Syed Anwar's son was taken to the Jehadi council of Ningarhar and he told the story. In order to hide the secret, the council threatened the boy to lie that he had gone willingly. After this judgment, those who committed the crime were released.

Various Jehadi crimes

Men were sent by Gulbuddin to take part in the war between Azerbaijan and Armanistan with a promise of 2.5 million dollars in return. The dead bodies of seven that belonged to Badakhshan were brought to Jalalabad on May 24, 1994.

On Friday, Saturday and Sunday, which coincide with the 27th, 28th and

29th of May respectively, fighting took place between the forces of Mazari's Hezb-e-Wahdat and that of Akbari. As a result of this war a number of important members of both the sides were killed.

On Sunday May 29th, the dead bodies of two women and a wounded one named Nadira were brought to the clinic of Khair Khana from Charikar. They were said to have been raped by armed men, then killed and wounded due to some conflicts.

On July 7th, a car loaded with doors, windows and other goods stolen from people's houses in Shahr-e-Kohna and Jadae Maiwand by Sayyaf's gunmen was being carried to Khair Khana. It was stopped by people from Shura-e-Nezar in Deh Afghanan to take their share of the things. As a result of this a fight started. A few of the peddlers were killed, and Shura-e-Nezar took the wood and sold it the next day.

A large number of the dead owing their fate to Dostum and Gulbuddin are lying in Karte Naw. They are not only buried but are covered with urine and stool by the forces.

It has been reported from Shahr-e-Kohna that on the 11th of July, a woman named Moqadasa who wanted to find out about her house, was raped throughout the day by people from the government check posts and those of Sayyaf. She was then released. Moqadasa approached many people but none of the criminal lords heard her grievances.

Mullah Abdul Salam Rakiti was forced by Sayyaf to negotiate on the matter of Chinese and Pakistani captives and consequently the problem was resolved by paying Mullah Rakiti. An amount of 200 million Afghanis from the government, 250 million from Sayyaf and 11.5 million rupees from Pakistani and Arab ambassadors was paid to him. His brother named Bang was also released from a Pakistani prison. But Mullah Rakiti was warned not to expose the matter of money under any circumstances.

Dog fighting of Wahdat and Gulbuddin bands

On the 18th of June this year, after the areas of Bala Hesar and Tapai Maranjan were taken over by Massoud's forces, Hezb-e-Wahdat in support of

General Dostum's forces, sent a number of its military troops to Karte Naw and Deh Khudaydad, one of sections of which was led by Commander Shafi Dewana. When the mentioned commander and his army fought against the so-called government forces in Tapai Maranjan, they were disarmed by commander Zardad from the Gulbuddin's party. Eight of them were killed and a few more were wounded and some captured.

Zardad's action provoked Hezb-e-Wahdat's leadership's anger and as a result they recalled their forces from the war front. In opposition, Gulbuddin blocked all the roads to Darul Aman and stopped the distribution of food. The reason for the fighting was the conflict between thieves over the plundered property and rape of a woman by Shafi Dewana's men in the area dominated by Gulbuddin.

"Tongue crime" in Dostum's Style

After two years away from our homeland, we returned to Kabul on December 31, 1993. We reached Kabul and started walking in the Pul-e-Mahmood Khan area – the Dostumis had a check post there – and wanted to sit in a taxi when an armed man stopped us and told my brother, "You told the taxi driver not to go through the Chaman route as Dostum's men are established there. You have insulted Dostum!" He started beating my brother and threatened to take him to their base or charge him one lac Afghanis for "tongue crime". Finally with a lot of difficulties, after we pleaded and paid them money we were able to free ourselves from those inhumane creatures.

Bibi Hawa, the dog killer

On the night of May 6, 1994, a group related to Gulbuddin's party entered the house of Rahmanuddin, a resident of Narak village, Sorkhrurd District of Ningarhar province for the purpose of robbery. Bibi Hawa, Rahmanuddin's wife woke him up when she heard the thieves' entrance. When Rahmanuddin left the room he was killed by the band's leader, Noor Agha. Bibi Hawa's brothers who had just arrived from Parwan woke up on hearing the firing and were wounded by the group leader.

Meanwhile Bibi Hawa got the chance to take her husband's Kalashnikov and targeted the robbers from the roof. Noor Agha and four other men were arrested and the other three were killed.

The next morning people came together to appreciate the courageous woman. They dragged the bodies by their feet and threw them on the main road near Bibi Hawa's house to show the enemy the brave woman's act. The so-called police and other security people pretended to search for their identity in order to hide the crime. The woman who had made a post on her rooftop did not allow the police to get close to the bodies and shouted loudly that they were the brothers of the dead bodies and that they could not touch them. After trying for one day the police succeeded in picking and burying the bodies of the dead.

The Jehadi commanders, in order to avoid more ill reputation, offered 70,000 Afghanis to Bibi Hawa, but in anger Bibi Hawa told Gulbuddin's men, "Give this money to those who have sold themselves to you and are the servants of Pakistan. Don't pour salt over my wounds. I want my husband and brother."

Sardar Jannat, the rapist

In the month of June 1994, one of Gulbuddin's men known as Qari Isa was appointed as a clergyman in one of the mosques in Qasaba called Mughal Takhar by the Jihad Islamic Affairs Department. Qari Isa, who accused the people there of being communists and threatened them, raped a small child who used to go to the mosque to learn the Quran. People became aware of the matter. Qari Isa who had pretended to be the angel of heaven before the people of the locality, escaped one night with the loud speaker and a few volumes of the Holy Quran. The next morning when people came for prayers, they found out that the Mullah had escaped. The people decided to capture him. They searched their surroundings and in the city and at 11 in the morning, Mullah Isa was found in the army division that was the military base of Gulbuddin. He was brought to the mosque. The local people put the loudspeaker and the volumes of Quran he had stolen on his shoulders to expose his dirty nature and to punish him. After a short while a commander of Hezb-e-Islami arrived with a group of armed men and released Qari Isa from the hold of the people.

More than eight corpses

During the destructive wars of August 1993 my friend fled from ruined Kabul and came to the Jaghoori district. He described the scenes in Kabul thusly, "After some days of constant fighting, it slowly calmed down and I went to visit the ruined areas of the city. As I passed through one of the destroyed houses, I saw a 6-month old child lying over her mother's chest. At first I thought that the woman might be alive but as I got closer I saw that the woman was beheaded and the brutal Jehadis had placed the dead body of the baby on her chest. As I walked on, I smelled a terrible odor and suddenly came across the dead bodies of three men and a woman. Covering my nose and mouth, I went to take a look incase I could identify them. They were completely shredded and their clothes were covered completely with worms. I could not recognize their ethnicity. Worse still, I also saw two heads and two hands that looked like the heads and hands of hardly six or seven year old children. These people were not killed by rockets or bombs but by close range gunshots from Kalashnikovs. I could see that their bodies had been pierced by bullets. The holes were clearly visible.

A youngster who died in my brother's arms

A heavy fighting took place in Shahr-e-Kohna. I saw death with my eyes. Thousands of missiles and rockets were hitting our surroundings. Our neighbors were injured. A piece of a rocket cut the artery of the foot of a 16-year old boy. Blood was sputtering from his foot. Despite the shower of artillery, my brother took him to the check post of Shura-e-Nezar situated in Cinema Behzad and asked the people to carry him to the hospital. No one paid attention to him and he died in my brother's arms.

A youngster who wanted a gun

On August 16,1994, a 17-year old boy named Jawed (a resident of Karte Seh in Kabul) was brought to Sehat-e-Aama hospital in Jalalabad. His eyes filled

with tears. He refused to talk too much and only said, "There are four criminals. They wanted to have sexual intercourse with me. When I got hemorrhoids they brought me to the hospital to find out if it was true or if I was lying." He choked with tears and couldn't say more. Later, while he was wiping off his tears he said, "I have not found a gun to kill them and myself. Can you help me?" And again tears rolled down his cheeks.

Robberies of the Jehadi Amir Latif

Amir Latif, the famous commander of Imam Sahib District who was first connected to Gulbuddin's party, then for a time was inclined to Dostum and recently joined Shura-e-Nezar, has committed countless crimes. Conquering Sherkhan Bandar, he was the first commander to rule there. He took possession of the property of the people and the government as booty. He distributed barrels of fuel to his friends and relatives while the residents of Sherkhan were in dire need of fuel and could not get a drop even in exchange for money.

The market for Latif's business and dealings grew to such an extent that he even sold the evacuated shops and houses to Jehadi commanders in spite of their owners being alive and present. Following this, he started to sell the doors and windows of destroyed houses. He charged trucks loaded with construction material for 300,000 Afghanis and those carrying metal for 100,000 Afghanis. These materials were meant for government constructions. All the buyers were the local commanders. The purchase and sale is still continuing and in the city of Sherkhan Bander there is almost no mark of governmental organization or shops.

80-year old Ibrahim and his crimes

Ibrahim Barnao, security commander of Imam Sahib District in the province of Qunduz, who was previously one of the commanders of the Gulbuddin party, has now become a member of Jamiat. He is 80-years old. He shot his first wife in front of his son while she was baking bread and her dead body fell into the oven. Then he married a 13-year old girl by the force of money

and gun. After a while he killed his second wife too and now he wants to marry another young girl.

Commander Ibrahim Barnao, after securing a government office got settled in Sher Khan Port where he robbed countless homes and raped many young girls. He took around 20 cars, rugs, a bed, fridge and other properties of people for himself. His armed group is no better than him in crimes and barbarism. In addition to harming and persecuting people, they levy 50,000 Afghanis from every car that enters Imam Sahib District. Barnao received 500 million Afghani for construction of thirty homes and 500 million Afghanis from an international welfare organization meant for the repair of the ruined houses in the area and then embezzled the money.

Piram Qul's Rogueries

Shura-e-Nezar's Piram Qul committed every kind of financial and sexual crimes against the people of Rostaq District in Takhar province. He usurped people's lands and homes by force of gun and distributed it among his relatives. Piram Qul and his crime associates created a wide set up for the maltreatment of the people and he recognized no other Jehadi authority.

In March 1994, Karim from a village of Rostaq was killed by a band of Jehadi thieves of Piram Qul in front of the police chief of Rostaq for no reason at all. Ghulam Rasool and Ghulam Farooq, accused of exposing the crimes of Piram Qul and Shora-e-Nizar, were forced to move to Kashm District from Takhar's Shahr-e-Kohna. In March 1994, Piram Qul and his agents started the construction of a new road from Rostaq to Dasht Qila (about 30 kilometers) to facilitate the easy passage of stolen goods to Rostaq. Everyday more than 200 people were forced to work without payment. When someone wanted to get married, he had to get an approval letter from Piram Qul according to which the father of the groom had to give one or two calves or goats for the Buzkashi event and the father of the bride had to give cash for the prizes of Buzkashi. If someone gave some excuse, he would be fined. Apart from this, nobody in Rostaq could marry off their young daughter without the permission of the Jehadi Piram Qul.

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I saw the shredding of people

On September 5th I wanted to visit a doctor. I hadn't reached the clinic when a number of rockets and a violent explosion engulfed the whole area, drowning the people of all ages in blood. In a moment dozens of men and women and children were bleeding all over the place. Agitated and terrified, I couldn't recognize anything when suddenly amid the smoke and dust, my eyes showed me a nightmare I can never forget. Shredded pieces of human flesh, clothes, veils and shoes were spread everywhere.

The people were bewildered and ran frantically everywhere. The shopkeepers and hawkers left everything and fled.

I was very shocked and weakened by this criminal act and as I tried to run away, I came across a woman who had lost her arm and lay half-naked on the corner of the road, bleeding. I only witnessed a few bodies drowned and throbbing in blood because later I came across bodies halved, or beheaded or without any arms or legs. I was choked with tears.

I couldn't speak or cry for help. With trembling feet, I tore the veil I was wearing for fear of Jehadis and threw it on the woman's body. I thought, 'Was this the revolution? Was this the Islamic government? Was this the observance of the Islamic *hijab* (the covering of the head and body in Islam)?' Although the air was dark, people were taken to the hospital.

After a few minutes, the ambulance of the Red Cross Hospital and the cars of some Jehadis arrived too, transporting the dead bodies to the places where they could be buried or placed for identification. Instead of going to a clinic, I rushed home as I overheard people on my way talking about rockets hitting a number of houses. They said that a rocket hit a house and killed the whole family. The scene floated around my eyes till the time I reached home. The explicit and constant curses sprouted hatred and disgust for the Jehadis especially Gulbuddin's gang who was throwing rockets everywhere, killing people all over the city.

The selling of loved ones

On November 9, 1994, a woman from Wardak gave birth to an unlucky child in a maternity hospital. She lived with her husband and family in Khushhal Mina the year before that.

Her house and property were robbed by Sayyaf's men.

After that they had to migrate to Parwan-e-Seh and live in one of the schools.

The family was so poor that they did not have enough money to buy a loaf of bread and couldn't possibly bear the expenses of a newborn child.

Thus the husband and wife decided to sell the baby in order to save the rest of their children. Rahimullah, a shopkeeper who was a resident of Microrian, Block 36 agreed to buy the child for the amount of 360,000 Afghanis.

Jehadi robbery

On December 19, 1994, the theft of the food and soap depot from the headquarters of Jamal Dara raised a lot of outcry. It was later discovered that the Jehadis in command themselves had committed the theft.

There are signs of looting at Rakha High School, the only high school left in Panjshir and also Bazarak High School.

The Jehadis have even stolen the bricks, stones and the wood. Only a few ruined mud rooms are left to use as a school.

Clearing in Gulbuddin style

A so-called clearing operation against the Jamiat, Ittihad, Harakat and Jabhe Nijat-e-Milli factions, was started in Logar by Hezb-e-Islami by inhumane commanders such as Zardad, Chaman and Qalam.

After the commanders of the above factions were disarmed by Hezb-e-Islami's men, they started looting the homes of the people in Kalangar, Bargi, Charkh-e-Logar and other villages in different parts of the province.

An experience worse than death, at the hands of murderous Jehadis

Khyal Gul, son of Abdul Ghani, a resident of the double road of Paghman in Kabul says with tears and sorrow, "Aggressive wars between Sayyaf Wahabi and Hezb-e-Islami with its allied dog Hezb-e-Wahdat, took place in the region. As a result of the war thousands of houses were destroyed. Among the sacrifices was my family. Due to a rocket strike on my house, I lost my mother, wife, a son and a daughter. People in the place took advantage of the opportunity and escaped. The dead bodies of my loved ones were left behind. My two sons and I, who were alive by chance, buried the bodies even though the situation was very bad. I was burying the bodies when savages of Hezb-e-Wahdat poured into my yard and started beating me without any reason. They blamed me for being in connection with Sayyaf and for burying the bodies of Sayyaf's men. They checked my pockets and took my money and watch. After burying my dear ones, we moved towards the city. On the way we were stopped by a few checkpoints. After searching us (because I had no money) they would ask us to get lost. At 4 o'clock in the evening we reached Haji Yaqoub Square and fell into the Jamiatis' claws. After beating and blaming us for spying for Gulbuddin's party, they put me and my two sons in a prison in Haji Yaqoub Square. We spent fifteen days being thirsty and hungry without investigation.

After getting released I borrowed about 45,000 Afghanis from my friend and came to Jalalabad. On the way in Mahipar, an armed group who were said to be linked to Mohammad Nabi, ordered the car to stop and took the driver to a far away corner. Then the professional thieves started searching the pockets of all the passengers. After taking 40,000 Afghanis from me and similarly from others they ordered the driver to move. And now in a hell of grief and bewilderment we are living a desperate life."

Fear of the "Ningarhar Council" from Gulbuddinis

Ghani, who was related to Gulbuddin's party and was teaching at the institution of Pedagogy in Ningarhar, destroyed five classes of Ningarhar School of Experiments on the 11th of August and built a luxurious house for himself

instead. Because this criminal belongs to Gulbuddin's party, no one from the Ningarhar council has the right to question him.

Crimes of a criminal father and son, protected by a criminal party

During the resistance war in the Kuhat camp, Dilawar, one of the commanders of Gulbuddin's party, married a girl from the northern region by force. After sometime the criminal married two other girls who were kidnapped by his armed men. In 1988, while looting one of the houses in Samarkhel district in Ningarhar he got killed by his own men. After the Jehadis came to power, Hakim, Dilawar's father returned to Saraccha (his village in Ningarhar) with his three widowed daughter-in-laws. On the night of September 25, 1994, he entered Kalima's room, his youngest daughter-in-law who was also the prettiest. His intention was to rape her. Kalima resisted and hurt her father-in-law with a knife and escaped on that very night to her brother Jilani's house. Jilani, who was a poor farmer and could not do anything, informed all the elders and invited a Jirga to punish Hakim. But before the Jirga could be held, Gulbuddin's men threatened him and got Hakim away.

Faheem, the security chief's palace

While talking to the people of the locality one of the young gunmen said, "We are tired of the war. There is no profession and business. There is rule of arms and ammunition. You can just live if you have arms. Even if we are with the Jehadis, we have a sad and poor life and our lives are also in danger. We are in the forefront of the battle for money. The commanders receive large amounts of money. They build big palaces for themselves, just like Fahim, the security chief, is constructing a palace near the Panjshir River. Suppose if there is peace and we are alive, we have nothing for our future.

They would say your Jehad was for the sake of God, Allah may give you its reward."

Criminal Pir Mohammad and his marriage to six women

Pir Mohammad was famous for robbery. During the resistance war after the Russian invasion he joined a Jamiat-e-Islami group and was designated at the post of a commander. With the black domination of fundamentalists and the bad luck of the people of Takhar, he became the security chief. Although he had four wives he had married during Jehad, Pir Mohammad started looking for an educated girl, till he married Abdul Karim's daughter. After a while the wretched commander fell in love with his sister-in-law and informed Abdul Karim. Abdul Karim disagreed and considered it against the Islamic Sharia Law. But Pir Mohammad did not pay attention to these contradictions and insisted on marrying his second daughter. Poor Abdul Karim went to the Mullah (religious leader) in the city and asked him to issue Fatwa related to the case. The chicken-hearted Mullah knew that issuance of such a Fatwa would get him into trouble, so he simply apologized. The case did not remain hidden within the four walls of the house, as the neighbors and the people of the city became aware of the situation. No one was ready to oppose the commander's bad intention. In the end, by applying pressure and threats Pir Mohammad succeeded in getting his sister-in-law. During this conflict, Qazi Mofrad, another mean father who had been bargaining over the price of giving his daughter to Pir Mohammad for two years, agreed to sell his daughter at a price of 500 lac Afghanis. Thanks to the "Islamic and Jehadi Revolution" Pir Mohammad could have six wives.

Payam-e-Zan, Issue No. 39 (February 1995)

Who killed Nazar Mohmmad?

Two years back, Nazar Mohammad went to bring some of his property from his house that was situated in Shahr-e-Kohna, but he did not return and was lost. Nasima, his wife was left alone with her four children and a world of sorrows. The unfortunate woman has no one to protect her or earn for her. She is now a maid in the gallery and works from 8 in the morning till 2 in the afternoon. Her salary is 70,000, which is not enough for her kids and her sick mother.

From the crimes of Shura-e-Nezar

A few days before Eid, the gunmen of Shura-e-Nezar took a 19-year old boy named Mohammad Karim Wardak as a captive. They asked his family to pay them 5 million Afghanis to release their son. They had set a deadline of five days. The poor family tried hard to provide the amount on the fixed date but in spite of their efforts they managed to prepare the money three days later than the deadline.

Mohammad Naeem Wardak, elder brother of the captive delivered the money to the commander of the region.

The commander received the money from Mohammad Nameem but they had already killed his brother three days before. They then killed Mohammad so as not to expose their crimes. They threw his body in a ruined yard where they had thrown his brother's body.

On the 3rd night of Eid, which coincided with March 4, 1995, Shura-e-Nezar forces attacked Rahimullah's house in Karte Naw. Rahimullah, his two sons Sharifullah and Naqibullah and his 13-year old granddaughter (Mohammadullah's daughter) were at home that night. The butchers slaughtered Naqibulla and Sharifullah with a knife and shot Rahimullah and Lema. They stole the property of the house and left a warning letter for Mohammadullah in the yard.

It's worth mentioning that two years back, one of Rahimullah's sons named Izzatulla was killed in Samangan by a member of Gulbuddin's party.

People are waiting for their death at any moment

On the night of August 21, 1994, Abdul Samad's daughter Najla, a teacher in one of the schools of Kabul city told her family members that they should carry identity cards and a copy of their pictures with them whenever they went out, just in case they got killed.

The next morning Najla went shopping in Shahr-e-Naw where she was targeted by a rocket that cut her head off. Her head was not found and her body was given to family as she had her identity card.

An account of General Kabir

Colonel Nemat, who was commander of General Moman's regiment sector 70, lived with his wife Shireen and two children in an apartment in Ansari Square in Shahr-e-Naw. He invited General Kabir, the commander of a brigade of the 70th battalion to his house a couple of times. The General saw Nemat's wife by chance and he began to think of having her. One day, General Kabir killed colonel Nemat and cut his body parts into pieces, put him in a bag and buried him. After a month General Kabir and his armed men entered Nemat's house and married his wife with the force of gun and carpel.

Jehadis and the university

On January 10, 1994, I went to Kabul University with the teachers and the councilors for the transfer of some relevant documents. One of the teachers said, "The scenes were very frightening and dreadful. Everything in the literature department was in disarray." There was no electricity. The rockets and heavy artillery had destroyed the building. One of the employees of the institute said, "I saw the scalp of a woman with long hair in the yard of the institute with my own eyes."

On April 4, 1994, during the reopening ceremony of Kabul University, Rabbani addressed the teachers and the students, saying that the destruction of the western part of Kabul had not been at the hands of the Mujahideen. He said the foreigners were responsible for the collapse.

In the medical institute of Kabul, the employees found a tanker full of fuel inside which were lots of amputated hands, lips, ears and breasts of women. From April 4th till 9th 1994, mass graves were found in Kabul University and the medical institute. Amongst them was the grave of a pregnant woman with her child sticking to her torn stomach. This woman whose body was completely black was found with other naked young men and women in a moat in Kabul's medical institute. They had been buried on the 9th of April by government forces.

In February 1994 and during the outbreak of war between Hezb-e-Wahdat and Jamiat-e-Islami, Dr. Deen Mohammad told his eyewitness account of an

incident that took place in the Red Cross hospital. "We were in the operating room operating a man when a rocket hit the hospital. Gravel fell down from the ceiling over the patient while we were stitching his stomach. The patient died. One of the doctors and I were badly injured."

Destruction of Kabul

On March 26, 1995, I traveled to Kabul from Jalalabad and the difficulties experienced on the way were just a small part of the troubles and sufferings that our people face everyday. The transportation fare had increased and the driver warned the passengers that if they could not pay 10,000 Afghanis he would turn back to Jalalabad when he was already half way through. Because the roads and the car were overloaded, we reached Kabul in eight hours. A big cage of hens was placed on top of the car. We were stopped by the Jehadis more than ten times, each time succumbing to the demand of a couple of hens. The man who owned the hens requested one of the aged female passengers to tell the Jehadis that the cage was hers. He said if he raised his voice he would get beaten and would loose all his hens.

I found Kabul completely changed. The shops were mostly placed in containers and carts. Most of the residential homes and governmental organizations were ruined in such a way that they were of no use. The areas of Khushhal Khan, Karte Mamoorine, Afshar, Qargha, Kote Sangi, Karte Char, Karte Seh, De Afghanan, Deh Mazang, Darul Aman, Chelsitoon, Karte Naw and Rahman Mina were so badly destroyed that it was impossible for the people to recognize their houses and shops. Although these areas were then under the control of the government, people did not have the courage to go there because the entire street and people's houses were mined. A few families that had gone there were killed in a blast. The electricity and the irrigation system of the city were out of order and the television channel was for the commanders who owned generators. There were no jobs in the government offices. Most of the civil servants only come for a signature and went back.

In the whole city only five to seven buses were working. The taxi fare was extremely high. For example the taxis charged 2,500 Afghanis from 1st sector

of Khair Khana to Karte Parwan. Most of the people traveled by foot, especially teachers and students. The schools opened on March 5, 1994. A number of schools were joined together. There were no chairs, tables and books and most of the classes had been ruined. The examinations left from 1991 were being held in a way that a student of class four in 1991 was now sent to class eight. The examinations were called 'promotions' by the people. Ayesha Durrani High School had been mingled with eighteen other schools and the teachers, students and maids used the yard. Every school was given one classroom that was used as an administration room.

Sexual abuse of a 70-year old man

In Karte Naw in Kabul I knew a 70-year old man who lived with his two daughters and a sick wife. When Dostum's dogs became aware of the situation, they decide to rape his daughters. When the old man understood the situation, he transferred his daughters and sick wife to some other place and was left alone at home. The next night, Dostum's men, all drunk and deranged, jumped into his house and started searching madly for his daughters, saying something must have been left behind. They beat him badly but were still not satisfied. They raped him turn by turn till morning and left after looting all the property of the house.

Raping of a refugee woman by a Jehadi

On January 21, 1995, a Jehadi called Sibghatullah, son of Habibullah from Shindand, entered the home of one of the Herati refugees in Shindand and forcefully raped the ill-fated refugee woman. Due to a lot of noise by her family, the people came to know and took the Jehadi to the centre of the city, but after a few hours one of his relatives named Sharafuddin, who was a commander somewhere in the borders, came and freed him.

On May 4, 1995, in Qila Gul Ahmad, five armed guards lead by Sardar and Majid entered the home of Ali Jan and Zabit Imam. Two refugees also lived in this

home, one of whom was a doctor. The guards, who had had a fee dispute with the doctor earlier, entered his home that night, raped his wife and stole all his goods and medicines. When the judge of the district heard about the incident, he came to the scene to investigate the matter. The doctor claimed, "I know them! One is Sardar, the other is Majid and the rest are guards of the district." But the judge said, "Bring two witnesses tomorrow and I will catch the thieves."

But the next day the commander of the district threatened the doctor to be quiet and not raise a lot of hue and cry regarding the matter.

Jehadi unchastity

On May 25, 1994, a Jehadi called Tahir took a boy to his garden with a bottle of wine to rape him. The people passing by saw this and informed the government forces. Tahir was caught with the bottle of wine and the boy but because he was the father-in-law of Nasir Ahmad, the commander of garrison of the Shindand Airport, he was freed that very day.

On October 24, 1994, a woman had a very serious disease and went to see a doctor. The doctor there was a Jehadi and instead of treating her, raped the ill-fated woman. Just at that time, the husband entered the operation theatre and learned about everything. He came home with his wife and killed his wife and then himself with his Kalashnikov.

Eating the heart and liver of a human

In February 1995, Hezb-e-Wahdat forced a Panjshiri prisoner to eat the heart and liver of another Panjshiri. After eating this, the man escaped with a serious health problem and was admitted in the Red Crescent.

Living next to a Jehadi

In March 1994, a man who had lived in Iran as a refugee for thirteen years returned home and rented a home next to a Jehadi in Shindand District. He

thought that the government is Islamic and his home is safe. Two days later he goes to his father-in-law's home with his family and Jehadi robbers enter his home and steal 45 lac Afghanis. The commander of the area and his men know the robbers but still don't confess.

Raping of their mother by three Jehadis

On January 22, 1995, a 50-year old woman was crossing a street after shopping when three Jehadis see her and point to her to come and make love with them. The poor woman begs them not to speak like that as they are like her sons. The Jehadis say something is better than nothing and all the three men rape the woman.

The relatives of the mother complain to the police but no one hears them. When the people hear about the incident, they abuse the "Jehadi leaders" and say the puppet regime was way better than the present government.

The Isamic government, supporters of rapists

A Jehadi named Bismillah, son of Abdul Rauf from Shindand, raped his wife's sister on November 25, 1994. After some time the people of the village learn about the pregnancy of the girl and the father of the girl is forced to complain to the "government". The "Islamic Revolution" government takes Bismillah to Herat. However, after ten days Bismillah returns to the village with some other Jehadis and is introduced to the local people as the Malik (land-owner) of the village.

The anger of the Jehadi sparrow-catcher!

On February 17, 1995 a 24-year old recently engaged boy named Dost Mohammad was killed by a Jehadi related to the Administration of the Security of Garrison. That day Dost Mohammad had gone to water his lands in the farm

and saw three Jehadis planting a sparrow trap in his newly cultivated wheat lands. He told them not to do so as it would destroy the crops he had worked on for months. The Jehadis get angry and one of them kills Dost Mohammad with his gun.

From Sarkhrud's district manager

On December 9, 1994, Abdul Jabar from Said Ahmad Gailani's faction and district manager of Sarkhrud, attacked the home of 18-year old Najiba and 22-year old Suraya – who were sisters – at midnight with his armed men. He kidnapped both sisters and took them to another place. From there he sold each sister for 45,000 rupees. Then he made another deal and sold both the sisters for 65,000 rupees to a third person. The 65-year old father went to Haji Qadir with some other elders of the area. Finally two months later after being traded and exchanged in deals, the two girls were found.

Ismail Khan and the opium-selling commander

On December 26, 1994, 20 sacks of opium were taken in by soldiers in Shindand airport. They were handed over to a commander called Abdul Aziz, but the commander sold the opium secretly. The police chief found out and reported to Ismail Khan. Ismail Khan removed the commander from his post temporarily, but a few months later gave him a post in the army in Herat province. After that he became the governor of Farah.

Saeed Kayan's son and the arrest of 2000 youngsters

On March 24, 1995, on command of Saeed Kayan's son, a siege was laid to the city of Pul-e-Khumri. Then they tried recruiting young boys of eighteen to twenty years of age. In just three days, 2000 young boys were arrested, left hungry and without bedding for three days. Later, the commander of the

regiment asked Saeed Kayan's son how long they would keep the boys with them. He replied, "Until the time the Kabul government's situation makes sense, and then free them." They were freed three days later.

Jehadis and women

A widow who lost her husband during the war was left alone to feed her five children and forced to survive a harsh winter and starving days. In order to feed her children, she worked in the Ministry of Culture and Information, but the head officer fired her for being a woman and told her, "You are a woman, how can you work in this office with men?"

Unchaste crimes of Gulbuddin's Zardad

We were on our way from Jalalabad to Kabul, when our car was stopped at Suroobi by Zardad (a thug of Gulbuddin). After everyone got down, they searched the men and took all their money from them. The passengers with more money were shot dead so they could not expose anything. An old man had 35,000 Afghanis with him and was pleading to them not to take his money, "I neither have lands nor any other belongings. I have young children to feed. Please don't take my money." But the Jehadis ignored him and ordered angrily for all his money to be taken. The poor man was forced to give all his life's belongings. In the end they all got into the car and beckoned the woman sitting in the front seat to get down. As she got down, a Jehadi rushed to search her. He pulled her veil but she resisted and covered herself. Then another Jehadi ordered shamelessly to search her by force.

She still stood firm when two gunmen held her hands and the first Jehadi inserted his hand inside her collar to "search" her. The woman cried and twisted and curled herself. The head of these Jehadis who stood at the corner and watched the woman, went to her and tore her whole shirt and she stood there all naked. All the men in the car lowered their eyes and gazed helplessly at the ground.

Hezb-e-Wahdat's

The women who were arrested or kidnapped by Hezb-e-Wahdat and locked up in the basements of the Russian Embassy were freed after Hezb-e-Wahdat was driven out of that area.

After the defeat of Hezb-e-Wahdat, many dried bodies of the innocent women were found in the basements of Barikote Cinema. Some of them were nailed on the walls and many cartons full of cut breasts were also discovered which was extremely shocking.

Mazari and his tray of eyes

A woman searching for her lost son tells her eye-witness story: "I went to Abdul Ali Mazari crying and pleading for my son and Mazari replied fiercely that my son wasn't with him. When I pleaded exceedingly, he remained silent for sometime and then said, 'Bring the tray.' His men brought a tray full of popped out eyes in front me. Mazari said, 'Find your son's eyes in them.' I was extremely shocked and traumatized and rushed out of there."

Payam-e-Zan, Issue No. 40 (July 1995)

Killing of the injured

According to the soldiers returning from the warfronts of Salang, most of the soldiers killed in the North Salang, Qunduz, Jawzjan, Faryab and elsewhere were Uzbek and Turkman.

The commander often ordered the injured ones to be killed, as transferring them was difficult. If any soldier retreated he was shot by the commander.

Jehadi "university staff"

Faizullah Jalal was assigned to be the assistant director of Education Faculty of Kabul University by Rabbani. In the last days of May, he severely beat

one of the professors of the Engineering Faculty named Ahmad Mir in his office. Later, it was found out that they had fought over the division of money donated for the building of the university, and hadn't reached an agreement.

Jehadi Cancour

After the invasion of the Mujahideen all the doors of schools and the University of Kabul were closed. In the last few days Kabul's situation has got better and the people can move around more areas around the city.

Rabbani has decided to reopen all the educational institutes as well as the administration departments.

The Education Administration announced the date for admission in different faculties and the date for the Cancour Examinations. All the students of twelfth grade were present for their exam that started at eight in the morning and lasted till late evening.

The main problem was lack of chairs for the students to sit on.

When the examiners distributed the paper, they announced that the faculty of medical treatment, children's medicine, dentistry, engineering, law and journalism should not be selected as they were already full and would not accept any new students!

The results were announced after four months.

The division of the students was very strange and ridiculous and till then had never happened in the history of the university.

The division was based on the student's language, religion, tribe and region.

The student who scored 125 was assigned in the Science Faculty while another student who scored 195 was assigned in the Physical Training Faculty even though he had chosen the Science Faculty.

A term, "parachute students" was famous and common amongst the students of Kabul University which referred to those who were admitted in their favorite faculty by the high orders of the Islamic government.

They did not take the Cancour Examinations and it was not even known if they had graduated from twelfth grade or not.

The amusement of the criminal Zahir Aghbar

On June 12th, hundreds of men and women were forced to sit under the scorching sun on the main road across Zahir Aghbar's office waiting for him to grant permission for them to move their belongings from one district to the other. Zahir Aghbar was the military assistant director of the Security Commission of Kabul. The "Islamic security forces" did not allow the families to return to their homes without the permission of the commission.

There were families who waited for more than ten days; some of them got permission and some failed completely. Zimarrai said, "My house in Karte Char of Kabul was completely burned. Now I am moving to Ghazni but the security men of the Islamic government have stopped my car carrying my children and belongings for three days and till now I have not succeeded in getting permission."

Hundreds lost

The fighting between the government forces and Hezb-e-Wahdat in the last days of February caused heavy bombardment in the inhabited areas of Qilay Shaada, Karte Seh and the closer neighborhoods. The people moved towards Gul Bagh and Char Aasyab through which they could migrate to Ghazni, Bamyan and Logar, but due to the severe infighting some families parted and lost each other on the way. A number of them were stopped by Shura-e-Nezar and the Taliban's group and their belongings were looted.

When families reached other provinces, they wrote letters to their relatives who had settled in mosques telling them about the lost family members (one, two or more) and requesting them to get some information on them.

Fazil, one of the leaders of Hezb-e-Wahdat confessed in his speech in March at the Masjid-e-Safaid (White Mosque) of Qulay Shada that about 650 men, women and children from the east of Kabul had been lost during the infighting of February, but according to the people the number is far more than 650.

Tajiki lackeys in the hands of Jehadis

The Tajiks of Chogha area in Khan Abad district of Ghazni province were mostly members of Nuhzat-e-Islami Tajikistan who were helped by the United Nations and Saudi Arabia. The main offices of Nuhzat-e-Islami were in the city of Taliqan and in the districts of Chah Ab and Farkhar of Takhar province. Their mobile radio station aired programs that spread propaganda against the Tajikistan government. They openly bought arms and weapons from the bazaars of Chah Ab and Farkhar districts. Most of their arms were provided by Shura-e-Nezar and Rabbani's government.

The Tajiks of Nuhzat-e-Islami had divided into two groups due to some conflicts between them. One of them joined the government while the other united with Gulbuddin and Sayyaf supported by Saudi Arabia. A number of them settled in the Baharak area of Badakhshan province where they received military training from Shura-e-Nezar.

Crimes of Burhanuddin Rabbani's cousin

Nasreen was the daughter of Hassamuddin from the Faizabad area of Badakhshan province. She was the fiancée of Commander Baseer Khaled, cousin of "president" Rabbani. Despite the request of Nasreen's family, Baseer neither married her nor allowed anyone else to marry her. Mahboobullah, the brother of Baseer cheated on Nasreen and developed illicit relationships with her. Commander Abdul Haq who was also the Security Chief told Baseer that if he was not marrying Nasreen he would, to which Baseer agreed. When Abdul Haq proposed and the family accepted, some people taunted Baseer because he was not marrying his fiancé. Baseer was instigated and told Abdul Haq that he wanted to marry Nasreen, but Abdul Haq refused. This created enmity between them.

Commander Baseer committed many atrocious crimes in the one decade of war. One example is the kidnapping of Zahira, the young daughter of Abdul Rauf Khan from Faizabad. Also during his tenure as a commander he collected a great deal of money by forcefully buying lands and gardens cheaply. One such

example was when he seized a garden in Akbar area of the Shorabak District and built a palace beside the Kokcha River in the center of the garden. Abdul Haq knew of Baseer's comings and goings to Shorabak and ordered his men to lay an ambush in the Sargani District and kill Baseer and his men. When Baseer's car passed it received numerous gunshots but he survived.

Baseer knew that Abdul Haq and Nasreen were behind his assassination attempt and went to kill Nasreen. She was on her way to her relatives' home when she was beaten severely by armed men of Baseer on the Qari Khana Road of Faizabad. She was extremely afraid of the commanders and having no other option fled to Tajikistan.

Jehadis' Robbery

Dostum bought about ten acres of land from the people of Andkhoi Port of Shibirghan and built an extravagant four story building. He was not satisfied with his splendid building and his men started threatening the surrounding neighbors to sell their lands to "King" Dostum.

His commanders Rasool, Ghafar and Lal threatened the neighbors to sell their lands; otherwise no one would even find their dead bodies. Dostum also excavated the Gold Mine of Dar-e-Kayan with financial and technical help from Turkey and each day filled a Kamaz truck with gold ores and extracted about four to five kilos of pure gold.

Rabbani had allowed the people of Panjshir to extract emeralds and only give 30% of the income to the government.

About 2000 people were busy in the extraction and pillaging of emeralds, which was the nation's wealth. The United Nations donated 62, 00000 Afghanis for the renovation of the high school of Rustaq District in Takhar province.

The governor of Takhar along with Pirum Qul spent all the money on pleasure and extravagance and collected money from the people for the school.

Haji Daadjan and Qari Latif gave three million Afghanis; Qayamuddin donated one million while the shopkeepers of Shahr-e-Naw contributed ten to twenty thousand Afghanis. Additionally all the landlords who did not even live there were forced to give money, otherwise all their property would be seized.

Rocket attacks of the Jehadis

On February 9, 1995, the Jehadis aimed at the residential areas of Kabul with a rocket attack that killed a family of nine in the Qala-e-Najaran area of Khair Khana.

In the infighting between Hezb-e-Wahdat and government during the last days of December 1994, both the parties aimed at the residential areas with their heavy arms. In the fighting, a rocket hit the Sangi School of Khair Khana, killing 25 to 30 refugees who were taking shelter there.

Dostum and Hezb-e-Wahdat bands, the payees of Kazakhstan

According to an authenticated report, 44 billion Afghanis were printed in Almaty (largest city of the Republic of Kazakhstan) and given to Dostum.

This money was divided by Dostum and Hezb-e-Wahdat.

It was exclusively meant for areas under Junbish-e-Islami and was rarely exchanged even in the center of transaction in the foreign exchange in Mazar-e-Sharif.

Payam-e-Zan, Issue No. 41 (November 1995)

The murder of two sisters

On January 3rd, a number of Jehadis attacked a house in Qalay Najaran of Khair Khana and brutally murdered two young sisters and then looted their entire house. This took place when their parents were not at home.

Four dead bodies in one well

In July 1995 four bodies were recovered from a well by the local people in the Parwarishgah-e-Watan (Watan Orphanage) in the area opposite the

Russian embassy. Two of the corpses were completely rotten and their faces could not be identified. They were killed when Mazari had control over the area. The other two dead bodies were Hazaras and were recently killed in the attacks of Shura-e-Nezar.

Separation from the loved ones

In December 1996, an old man in Khair Khana called his neighbors and told them, "I am getting old and I cannot work anymore. I sold everything in the house to feed my children and keep them alive but now I have nothing to sell.

I cannot even escape from Kabul; therefore I am engaging my three daughters to you and giving my two sons to someone so they do not die of cold and hunger." Hearing these words, the neighbors contributed some money and collected some from pedestrians until they were able to fulfill their needs to a small extent.

Discovery of two mass graves

On January 4, 1995 when Karte Seh, Karte Char, Kabul University, Darul Malimeen (Education Faculty) and Ibn-e-Sina Hospital were snatched from the claws of Hezb-e-Wahdat and fell into "government" hands, two mass graves were found as witnessed by many people of Kabul.

In the first grave, countless bodies of men and women had been buried alive by Hezb-e-Wahdat. It was a horrible scene; the dead bodies of three babies that were born after their mothers had died were there; folded and headless bodies of men and women reminded a person of one of the graves of Hitler's Holocaust. In the other grave, eight bodies had been thrown in a chest two meters in length and one meter in breadth. They had penetrated into each other with heads and feet cut off.

On January 5th this chest was opened and the people saw it. On January 7th Rabbani cancelled his trip to Kabul University. Not only did he see the graves but ordered the bodies to be buried somewhere unknown the very next day to prevent further disgrace.

Which Jehadi-blighted area is better?

On August 18, 1996 the 3rd zone security post of Kabul belonging to the groups of Akbari and Anwari from Sheikh Asif's movement requested the people of Jamal Mina and Karte She to return to their homes. These people, who were forced to leave their homes and cottages due to the intense fighting, complained to them about the looting of their wealth, even the windows and doors of their homes.

They said that until the "security posts" had not finished looting the area and left, their return was impossible. Most of those who returned at the Jehadis' insistence were chased away by the armed men of Anwari and Akbari. The armed men claimed that since they had conquered that area, people were not allowed to live there.

Security Commission of Kabul City

The Jehadi groups and factions had organized councils, committees and commissions in different parts of the country with a similar nature but different names. One of them was the "Security Commission". These unions had blocked all the squares and streets to keep a strict eye on the local people. Although these posts and blocked areas had different numbers for identification, all of them were famous as the post, regiment, brigade and battalion of some commander.

The commanders of the blocked areas and posts gave daily detailed reports to the higher commanders and were usually close relatives of them like brothers, uncles or brother-in-laws. Here is a summarized report of some of the so-called filtration activities of the unions by a participant of these activities, "In the first days of October 1996 the areas of Mosehi Village of the Char Aasyab District under direct control of Younis Qanooni and Zahir Aghbar were searched. Some nearby villages were searched but none of us dared to go to further villages that were firing on us from above the mountains. We left from there safely and my part of annihilation of the area got me eight mattresses, a set of sofas, a steel armchair, a broken and rusted sword and three magazines of

Kalashnikovs with 300 bullets in them. These items were sold near the Bagh-e-Zanana (the bazaar of the armed smugglers) for these costs: each mattress for 3000 Afghanis, the set of sofas for 4500 Afghanis, each empty magazine for 9000 Afghanis, each bullet for 280 Afghanis and no one bought the sword.

"The next week we started a search operation in the south-west area of Kabul Airport. I got a Kalashnikov and a car battery. The Kalashnikov was sold for 600,000 Afghanis and the battery for 800,000 Afghanis. There were three of us, and my share was 230, 000 Afghanis.

Two days later we took part in searching the Qalay Fatwah area near Rishkhor. Unfortunately I was not very successful as Brigade Shah Mahmood forcefully took most of the booty, including an army suit, boots, typing machine, VCR and many more items. Despite this, I got a pocket radio, fifty cassettes and a video cassette."

It merits a mention that filtration activities were carried out by the regiments of brigades 910 guarding the Kabul Airport. The commander of this brigade was Zahir Aghbar's brother. They searched and looted people's homes day and night.

The acts of the "security" criminal

In the last days of March in 1996 a butcher along with the commander of the Tarmim Khana post of the Ministry of Industry and Mine in Khair Khana Mina (near the Hazrat Ali Mosque) bought sixty sheep from a shepherd and took the flock along with its shepherd to Taimani with the excuse to pay him when they reached there. They searched him and took his 16,000,000 Afghanis and then killed him and his son and threw their dead bodies in a corner of the street. The local people discovered the bodies and reported it to the infamous thieves and murderers of Eleventh Police Station. These thieves declared the place from where these dead bodies were found as the spot for the execution of the murderers just to delude the local people. After a short time the murderers entered into an understanding with some employees of security organs and divided the money and flock as booty. According to them, the problem was "solved".

Unchaste crime of Haibat Khan,director of Elementary Education

On September 30, 1996 Haibat Khan, the director of the Elementary Education of the Ministry of Education went to the house of a girl who worked in the Sherpur Middle School with his bodyguards and kidnapped her on the excuse that the minister had come to school and she had to go urgently. He had proposed earlier to the girl but she had rejected. The family of both Haibat Khan and the girl realized it and reported their disappearance to KHAD and the police.

The criminal Haibat Khan who was sure that the girl's family couldn't marry her from the fear of disgrace, dropped her back at her house at eight in the morning of October 4th and told her, "I will send a proposal again. This time your family will agree." That day Haibat Khan was arrested from his house on the charge of kidnapping a girl and committing an unchaste crime and taken for investigation. But the next night "Ustad" Talafni ordered that Haibat Khan be released immediately as he was an experienced and good fighter (Mujahid). He was released that night.

The Gulbuddini - Massoudi Agha Shireen

Agha Shireen Salangi was a former Gulbuddin ally. When Massoud came to power in Parwan province he joined Shura-e-Nezar. He was an infamous criminal who looted people, forcefully took money from shopkeepers or seized their shops and sold them to someone else. His men were similar to Dostum's men who kidnapped and looted and committed unchaste crimes. On one of the days of August, Nisar Ahmad, the 12-year old son of Ghulam Nabi was flying a kite from the balcony of his house in Shahr-e-Naw of Charikar. The armed men of Agha Shireen were passing that area when they saw Nisar Ahmad and wanted to take away his kite. He resisted. This angered the ruffians, who then shot and killed him mercilessly and made his widow mother grieve forever. On January 28th, Agha Shireen was arrested by Shura-e-Nezar for his secret communications with Gulbuddin. Eight days after his

arrest, all the bakers, butchers, fruit-sellers and people whose houses were transacted by him went with many petitions to Massoud, but no result yielded.

The biting of "Spey" for creating a Gulbuddini society

A Jehadi of Gulbuddin's party in Suroobi was nicknamed "Spey" (dog) by the travelers and local people for his crimes. When he discovered his nickname, not only did he love it but also wore a chain around his neck. Spey's face was also different from normal human beings. He had a short but big nose, his face was marked with scars, his moustache and beard were unshaved and he had long hair. He wore coarse clothes with a Pakistani jacket and he smelled badly. Travelers who seemed suspicious by Zardad's (one of Gulbuddin's commanders) men were handed to Spey for interrogation. He would attack the suspicious person and bite and tear his body with his claws like a dog. Spey said, "Whenever my master (commander) orders me to attack, I bark and growl and tear the person apart and force him to confess. This pleases my master and I enjoy it."

Sometime back, he was spotted in a bazaar of Peshawar when many refugees and money-changers whistled and shouted, "Beware! Spey is here. Get aside." Upon hearing this many people left the area out of fear.

Of Dostumis and Sayyafis

In the village of Qatl-e-Aam in Charda District of Qunduz Province, thirty families of poor farmers lived. On March 27, 1995 Dostum's militia ordered the farmers to either give five lac Afghanis or be killed. The poor people were only able to prepare three lakh Afghanis and give it to Dostum's thieves.

The next day the killers of Ittihad-e-Islami got to know about the affair and, competing with Dostum's men attacked the village and asked for four lac Afghanis as a fine. The people were to give the money the next day or else they would suffer at the hands of the men. The people of this village were scared so they prepared 1.5 lakh Afghanis and gave it to them.

Captives in barrels of the Wahdati criminals

On April 4, 1996 twelve barrels welded from the top and given tiny holes to allow air to enter were made and were being transported from Taimani to Dasht-e-Barchi on a lorry. When the lorry was stopped for searching at the Dehmazang Square, a cry was heard from a barrel, "For God's sake give me water. I am burning!" After that cries came from all the barrels. The person searching was shocked and called other people for help. When the driver and four men involved with Hezb-e-Wahdat saw that their secret had been discovered they tried to escape but were arrested by the men at the post. The lorry along with the captives and the Wahdatis was transported to the 3rd zone security administration. I couldn't find out who the captives were or the reason for their capture.

Adultery in the vicinity of God's House

Ismatullah was a commander of Haji Zaman Khogyani. A young girl who was his children's home tutor was taken by him to Saudi Arabia for Hajj and during Hajj both of them stayed in one room. When he returned, many Hajis from Jalalabad and Laghman discovered that they were not related to each other and claimed that Ismatullah had taken the girl for his pleasure; accusing him of adultery. They wanted to punish him according to the Sharia laws. Haji Zaman and other ruling Jehadis involved in the crime, escaped justice and silenced the rumor using trickery and deceit.

"Abdul Maroof"s and their interest in the special manner of urinating

The Islamic government of Rabbani created a new department by the name of "Bulmaroof wa Nahi-un-munkir" (Vice and Virtue Department) for strengthening the pillars of Islamic fascism and essentially copying Iran. They were called "Abdul Maroofs" by the people. This department controlled and

watched modesty in the dress of men, women's hijab (covering the head of women to guard their modesty), men's beards and the greeting by children to elders as well as compassion towards elders. In most of the governmental departments they had their management and had sent men in different parts of the city as well.

Abdul Maroofs stopped a person on Deh Afghanan Street for the crime of urinating there, beat him severely and held him in their custody for eleven days.

Payam-e-Zan, Issue No. 42 (February 1996)

Difference between the anti-women horrors of Taliban and the "government"

Women officials faced more inhumane and misogynistic treatment from Jehadis than Taliban men despite the fact that organizations like the Vice and Virtue Department and Ideological courses agreed that women are equal to men.

Women were abused and insulted by Jehadis for not wearing hijab, for shaking hands with non-Mahram (male relative other than brother, father or son) and for other "crimes". Most of the governmental departments and officials' cars had separate areas for women so they could stay away from non-Mahram men.

In many situations the women were reproached for not following the orders of the Vice and Virtue Department.

For example, Roohullah, the manager of Pashtani Tijarati Bank, went to all office branches, and ordered – in accordance to the Vice and Virtue Department's rules and regulations – that any woman wearing a colored scarf or whose scarf falls accidentally will have a three day salary deduction.

A worker of the Ministry of Agriculture by the name of Khaled Forough greeted a woman in his office on February 3, 1996 whereupon he was slapped by Mustafa Jawad, an assistant of the ministry. Mustafa Jawad belonged to Rabbani's gang. He ordered his armed men to beat the innocent worker severely. According to the laws, women in offices were to avoid laughing loudly and if a woman and man were caught greeting each other or shaking hands they would be punished according to the Sharia Law.

The price of Gulbuddin's cooperation with the "government"

The government paid over 1.1 billion Afghanis to Gulbuddin's party to facilitate and organize the meeting between Dr. Abdul Rahman, the government representative, with Gulbuddin in Suroobi on Feb 24, 1996. This meeting was expected to achieve a "reconciliation" deal between the two sides.

Some people believed that Massoud planned to trap Gulbuddin and eventually kill him if he entered Kabul, unless Gulbuddin took preemptive action against Massoud.

Others were of a slightly different opinion that, as shameful as the matter was, Massoud was trying to bring Gulbuddin in the government and was ready to bear him, so as to make him less important and harmful, as he was already confronted with the more powerful Taliban and Dostum.

Jehadi robbery

Besides other forms of corruption in the Ministry of City Development, confiscation of private houses and apartments is very common.

Many apartments whose owners were not present and had appointed their relatives to look after them have been seized by the ministry and sold out or distributed to other Jehadis.

In such crimes, Karim Khadam, the vice-managing director, Inayatullha Baligh, the managing director and Engineer Latif, the head of KHAD, were the key players and Ahmad Shah Ahmadzai, the so-called care-taker Prime Minister used to sign "the sale contracts" to give them legal status. There are many apartments in Old Microrians and other Microrians that were snatched by the Jehadis in this way, and this left a dispute between the actual owners and the Jehadi owners.

For instance, apartment number 106 belonging to Dr. Sakhi Marjan was given to the head of Communication & Documentation from the Ministry of Information and Culture and the apartment of Engineer Aziz, the former Minister of Plan and Deputy Prime Minister was given to Amaruddin Salak, the technical assistant of the Ministry of City Development.

Father, don't sell me

On April 15, 1996 at 8:30 in the morning, a tall, thin man was leaning against a wall with his three children, a 13-year old daughter, two sons of nine and seven near the Dental Hospital in Pul-e-Bagh Umoomi in Kabul. He was shouting, "Buy my children.

"I soon realized that he wanted to sell his children, each for 300,000 Afghani. His younger son, who was weeping and clinging to his father's feet, told him, "Father, don't sell me."

The murder of a mother and kidnapping of her daughter

On the evening of December 12, 1995 an armed gang entered the fourth block of 3rd Microrian, killed the mother and took away her young daughter. When the neighbors complained to the security unit, they replied, "We are investigating and you don't have to do anything."

Thefts of Ahmad Shah Ahmadzai, the "caretaker Prime Minister"

Ahmad Shah Ahmadzai is one of the richest Jehadis, who is the caretaker Prime Minister of Rabbani. He has so far built six lavish buildings and a bakery that runs with gas out of the money he receives from the Arabs and through his authoritative power. He has a house in Wazir Akbar Khan, 6 plots in Khoshhal Khan Mina, one 5-story building next to the petrol pump of Shahr-e-Naw, the hotel of Afghan Tour in Shahr-e-Naw, and has purchased or seized ten other commercial plots in different areas of Kabul city.

In addition, Ahmadzai has built two mosques which are close to Sherpoor Mosque. According to reports, the costs of the two mosques would not exceed 100 million Afghanis while he has taken 600,000 US dollars from Arabs.

Monthly stealing of 45.5 million Afghanis

Engineer Bismullah, a resident of Kohistan from Jamiat-e-Islami and the head of the House Construction and City Development Agency, took the salary of 2000 workers while actually there were 700 workers. From 1993 to 1995 this money became 45.5 million Afghanis.

Corruption of Jehadi officials

There is a growing difference between the low ranking government employees and those of high ranks who are mostly Jehadi or pro Jehadi. The uneducated and ignorant Jehadis, no matter what the rank, enjoy the best facilities. The monthly salary of a Jehadi minister is 5,000,000 Afghani, which does not include 300,000 for the house rent, 200,000 for their transportation and extra money for their bodyguards (actually each have two or three but take the money for five to ten bodyguards). The salary of their deputies and department heads are slightly lesser.

This is the "legal" income but nobody knows their exact income that largely comes from bribes and embezzlement. Syed Nauman, the head of investigation for the Attorney General gets a salary of 2.34 million Afghanis, in addition to the salary of fifteen bodyguards, 300,000 for his house rent and 334,000 for running religious classes.

Selling children and collective suicides

Poverty that lasted for a short period in Kabul pushed the price of wheat flour to 250,000-300,000 Afghanis per 100 kg bag.

Out of destitution and poverty, many people have been seen to either put up their children for sale or commit suicide.

A man took his children to a mosque in Khair Khana and told the people that he couldn't feed his children and asked them to buy the children.

A rich Jehadi finally bought his son and daughter. Another family of Khair

Khana threw all their children into a well to avoid watching them die slowly or selling them to someone.

Jehadi gift: increase in beggars and prostitutes

One fallout of the Jehadi rule is an unprecedented increase in the number of beggars and prostitutes in Kabul city. Most of the beggars are children and women.

Young women, who have lost their husbands during the fighting turn to prostitution as a last resort to find a source of life for their children.

The Jehadis ordered the aid agencies to check the aid items with the government before delivering them to the beneficiaries so that they could have their share as well.

This heinous attitude is not just for stealing the aid items, but is also for dragging innocent women into prostitution.

If the former Russian-backed regime paved the way for prostitution to grow by unemployment and poverty, the current Jehadi regime has added to this problem along with other miseries.

Theft by Mullah Labib and Qadir Fitrat

An employee of National Radio & Television by the name of Labib who runs a religious school opened a new account at the National Bank for the construction of a mosque with the help of Qadir Fitrat, the manager, who is his close relative.

The manager approved the withdrawal of 5 million Afghanis by Labib for the mosque.

Labib, who is also the head of the Religious Teaching Department at the National Bank, allocated 108,000 Afghanis out of the mosque's budget to his religious classes.

He is known as a fierce Mullah who woul treat his employees of the National Bank badly if they didn't attend his classes.

Murder of a pregnant woman and her two children

In November 1995, an armed gang entered the house of a woman located at the fourth floor of Microrian Block 38, which is adjacent to the 302 police checkpoint.

The gang killed the pregnant woman and her two children and then took away all her possessions. All the people blame the 302 police checkpoint for this crime.

At the Jehadi Ministry of Health

Bribes and connections have replaced competency in the medical faculty. Only an order by high authorities or a large bribe can appoint a low-grade doctor as a lecturer in the medical faculty.

The department of the Ministry of Health that overlooks and checks the chemicals at the market has found a new way of snatching money from the people.

They raid the medical stores and fine them for a large sum of money by accusing them of using double standard medicines or smuggling them, and this money of course goes to the minister's own pocket.

Dr. Ahsamuddin Ahsam from Parwan province, who is the head of the pharmacy department, has become a billionaire since he began working in this department, mostly because of his close relation with Massoud.

He likes to stay at a luxurious hotel when he goes abroad on official tours and then prepares the bill for the government to pay.

The Minister of Health, who has the honor of being the father-in-law of Rabbani's son, was in London from August till November 1995 to celebrate the wedding of his daughter and then prepared a bill of 45,000 dollars for the government as his travel cost.

The deputy of the ministry, Dr. Sahar, is said to have had some disputes with "Jehadi brothers" in the past five months and is continuously travelling to India, giving health problems as the reason.

The head of the Foreign Relation Department, Dr. Zalmai from Panjshir,

travels every year to the US on official visits and receives large amounts for his travel costs, which has made him a businessman rather than an official from the Ministry of Health.

The head of the Publication Department who often takes charge of the ministry at the absence of the Minister was on an official tour to London but he suddenly changed his schedule and flew back to Kabul from Delhi, meaning that he might have found a better deal.

Legal Robbery

The Jehadi personnel of the airport sell all the spare parts of the planes to the local market and when those parts are needed bacl they ask the concerned department to issue the order of buying them.

They again buy those spare parts and prepare bills with fake prices.

The Russians and the scud missile in Panjshir

A scud missile that was mounted in Kabul was taken by the Shura-e-Nezar to Panjshir where they repaired it with the help of the Russian engineers.

Shura-e-Nezar's style of atrocity

A 16-year old boy named Zabiullah was kidnapped by an armed gang of Shura-e-Nezar from Qala-e-Fatullah (Kabul) on September 27, 1995.

The kidnappers kept the boy for fifteen nights and demanded an amount of 70,000,000 Afghanis.

The family of the kidnapped boy was attempting to provide the money but the blood-thirsty criminals burnt the innocent boy with petrol on the 15th night and asked his parents to get his dead body from Hod Kheil.

His parents found the burnt body of Zabiullah and buried him the next day.

"Afghani Pride" of a petty Jehadi Minister

An Afghan trader in Japan by the name of Siddiqui had given 20 million Afghanis to the second secretary of the Afghan embassy in Japan as aid for the needy people of Kabul. Upon returning, the secretary decided to give the money to the patients at the Jamhooriat hospital with the advice of a journalist called Riffat. On March 14, 1996, the secretary and the journalist went to the hospital to give the fund to the patients. In the mean time Barikzai, the health minister was in the hospital and came to know about the fund and asked Riffat to give him more details. Riffat said, "We are going to distribute the money sent by an Afghan trader." Mr. Barikzai asked, "Did you inform the hospital administration and the ministry of health? The fund shouldn't be distributed without the permission of the health ministry." Riffat replied to the minister, "This is the money of the trader not of the ministry. If this money had been given to the health ministry, like other funds, it would have been robbed."

The minister became very angry and attacked Riffat in front of the patients and doctors. He beat him with the help of his bodyguards and said, "Are you blaming me for robbing? My family and I were living with our Afghani pride in England and they are still in London. I don't need money! Even the ministry post was given to me by force by the Islamic government."

Looting by the militants of Dostum

Balkh province gets its electricity from Uzbekistan but there has been a shortfall of electricity in most parts of the city. The electricity department listed the damage of the underground cables as the only cause of this problem. The department collected 500,000 Afghanis from every house for the maintenance of the cables. Despite huge amounts of money raised by the people, the electricity problem is still there and the head of the electricity department who is close to Rasool Pahlawan is believed to have embezzled the entire amount. The opening of Salang Highway provided a golden opportunity for Dostum and his henchmen to generate good income. They made a law that restricted the traders to using the highway only on Sunday and Wednesday. The traders took

their goods from Kabul to a place near north Salang called Char Maghzak. This was the battle line between Dostum and the government that was filled with land mines. The traders carried their goods on trolleys and each trolley was charged for 300,000 Afghanis, plus 5000 to 8000 was charged by checkpoints as toll tax, and there were more than ten checkpoints on the five kilometer highway. In addition, every passenger that traveled from Kabul to the Northern provinces needed a permission slip which cost 300,000 Afghani.

On October 10, 1995 a 16-year old boy was kidnapped by Dostum's men. They demanded 30,000,000 from his father who was the owner of Alborz Hotel. The boy later told of how he had been sexually abused by the kidnappers.

Kidnapping of a logistic officer by his Jehadi brothers

A henchman commander of Dostum with the help of Hezb-e-Wahdat lured an army corps logistics officer from his home by telling him that the core commander had asked him to come to the office. The plotters forcefully recorded his voice on a tape, on which he tells his wife to give them 200,000,000 Afghani. His wife sold all her jewelry and provided the whole amount to the brother-in-creed of her husband.

A crime lord and "democratization"

The head of Jamiat-e-Islami said at an international conference about Afghanistan's development on July 15, 1996 which was broadcasted on TV, "It is worthless to criticize the previous governments, we must criticize the current situation."

While he was reading the conference agenda, he said, "Anyone who wants to write an agenda must have high qualifications and enough expertise in his field."

The first agenda was about education. He said, "The present text books are of no value for a good education. we need to make new books based on models from Iran, Egypt, India, England and France." There was an agenda on

democratization of the press and economy. Close friends of the head said that he neither understood the meaning of that agenda nor believed in it.

Hassan "broken head" and "honor and chastity" of Dostumis

In September 1995 Dostum's men celebrated their victory of taking Dara-e-Souf of Samangan province. It was shown on Mazar TV. Some notorious faces showed up such as Majid Rozi, Aka Yasin, Sher Arab, Haji Ahmadi and a few criminals from Hezb-e-Islami. One of the commanders by the name of Haji Ahmadi, known as Mir Hassan, talked highly about modesty and honor and called himself "defender of his countrymen's rights". But he was a criminal who was widely known for looting, car thefts and kidnapping in Mazar-e-Sharif.

The people call him Mir Hassan "broken head". He killed many drivers in Dashte Shore and sold their cars, kidnapped and raped many women and girls, and kidnapped children for ransom.

On November 2, 1995 a businessman was killed by an unknown armed man when he was getting out of his car close to his house. On the same night, Dostum said on TV that the people are fully protected and should carry on with their business.

Fighting between Nasr and Nuhzat

After a mass killing by Nasr's men (Hezb-e-Wahdat of Mazari), militants of Nuhzat in Jaghoori tried to plot against Nasr for revenge. They took position at Tabar Ghonak in Zard Koh and sent a delegation of elders to make Nasr agree to come for peace talks on Eid. Sabir, in charge of Nasr's finance and Rahmi from Alodal, the well-known commander of Nasr, went for the peace talks with Nuhzat.

They got trapped by Nuhzat's men near Zard Koh and were killed there. The following day, Nasr declared Jihad against Nuhzat and in this way fierce fighting started between the two Iranian backed groups.

A true "Islamic National Movement"

Dostum ordered that all the departments provide detailed information about the identification of their personnel to the office of Islamic National Movement (headed by Dostum). He then fired all Pashtuns and Tajiks from the departments and hired his own men.

Tollbooth at Salang Highway

Once a beautiful highway, Salang has now turned into the battle ground for Dostum and Jamiat-e-Islami gangs, who earn large amount of money through tollbooths. Dostum and Sofi Payinda have control over Salang Highway and snatch large sums from the passengers of vehicles in the name of tolls. General Imamuddin, the commander of Khinjan gives the entry permission and Qilich Pahlawan stamps the slips, and each of them gets 200,000 Afghanis from passengers. The commander openly says, "We don't have any salary, this is our income"

Kidnappers don't even spare patients

In November 1995, a Gulbuddin gang kidnapped Haji Amin Gul and kept him for 45 days, demanding 4,500,000 Afghanis as ransom. After his release, Haji said, "The kidnappers had beards and beat me all the time even though I was very sick."

Sexual dishonor by Jehadi

On April 10, 1996, a widow was collecting firewood when two armed young men stormed into her house. Both of the men had grown up with that widow. They raped and then killed her.

The neighbors heard the poor widow shouting, "Shams Jan, Matin Jan, I fed you milk, I am your mother, don't rape me."

The people reported this case to the police and both of them were arrested but were soon released by Gulbuddin's men for 400,000 Afghanis.

The 5-day circumcision ceremony of Dostum's sons

The circumcision of Dostum's son was held on Feb 28, 1996 in Shibirghan. Commanders were invited from neighboring provinces of Faryab, Jawzjan, Sar-e-Pul, Samangan and also from Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.

It was a big ceremony and various games like Buzkashi and wrestling were held and the winners were given golden prizes. A wrestler from Uzbekistan who beat a wrestler from Shibirghan received a large amount of gold by Dostum. Thousands of wealthy people were invited for dinners at expensive hotels for two consecutive nights, and each guest gave a few sheep to Dostum in return. Artists like Wahid Sabiri, Amir Jan Saboori, Jawad Ghazi Yar, Mahmood Kaman, Massoud Khyber, Khair Mohmmad Chawish, Dawood Chawish, Shir Mohammad Ghaznawi and Sakhi Shibirghani performed on the occasion.

Cheating and crime by Dostum's generals

In May of 1995, General Mir Hashim with the help of General Sadiq, sold two army vehicles for 75,000,000 to two people, one from a Hazara ethnic and another from Panjshir. The buyers were then rounded up by the general's men and asked to provide the vehicle registration documents. Since none of them had proper documents, both of them were arrested on the charge of stealing the vehicles. They released the Hazara man after he paid them a large sum of money but they killed the Panjshiri who had no money.

Crime by Dostum's commander

In October of 1995, an armed gang of Dostum followed a female teacher from Khadija School. While they tried to get her in their car the woman, knowing

that they wanted to rape her, spat at them. The cruel commander of the gang killed the woman on the spot, raided her house and took away the whole family and they are still missing.

Payam-e-Zan, Issue No. 43 (June 1996)

Sexual dishonor by Shura-e-Nezar

A rocket hit a house on May 24, 1996 that belonged to Abdul Karim, located on Street 2 of Taimani-Kabul.

His son, Ajmal, was killed and he himself got seriously injured.

Abdul Karim was admitted to Jamhooriat hospital where his wife visited him everyday with her two small children.

On her way back home, Pari Gul, wife of Abdul Karim, was trapped by the armed men of Shura-e-Nezar.

After keeping her for one night and raping her, the armed gang threw her out near her house.

The neighbors came to know of this story but couldn't report it because there was no law enforcement agency that they could trust.

Embezzlement by Qadria Yazdan Parast

One citizen noticed that in his neighborhood cars full of flour, oil and other aid materials from foreign aid agencies that were for the destitute people of Kabul, were stored and sold to brokers.

He reported the issue to the police.

The police took siege of the house and retained all the materials.

They thought it belonged to some non-Jehadi person.

At this juncture Qadria, who was the real owner of the store, was informed. Immediately she contacted her bosses and succeeded in silencing the case and even preserving some of the materials in her store.

Selling of loved ones

In the last days of last winter, a father who had lost everything due to Jehadi rocket shelling couldn't afford the expenses of his 7-year old grandson. He sold his one and only grandson for only 300 Afghanis ($13) near Pul-e-Khishti Mosque. He was crying in such a way that he was not able to speak or count the money.

Dishonor in religious course

Maulawi Bashir Badakhshani is a teacher in the religious beliefs course in the Ministry of Refugee's Repatriations. He behaves rudely and insults women and girls in the course.

They have already complained about this Jehadi Mullah but nothing has changed because he has power. Then he was found with a naked girl in his room on the April 15, 1996.

The incident was reported by Taimur Shah, an employee of the branch to Maulawi Abdul Hakim, second deputy minister. The deputy minister called Maulawi and the girl to his office and fired Taimur Shah from his job on charges of looking at a naked girl and not closing his eyes.

Rape at KHADI - Jehadi celebrations

On the first of May, 1996 in one of Dostum's commander's celebrations, electricity went out for twenty minutes. In that time women and girls who had been pinpointed already by the cruel Jehadis were raped and then released or killed. One girl's dead body was found near Alti Khwaja village.

From a Jehadi orphanage

The war for power not only brought the country destruction but also made hundreds of children and youngsters desperate. There are 850 orphans in an

orphanage in Kabul. Maintaining a decent and reputable life in Kabul is very difficult in the presence of savage Jehadis. They live a very depressing life with limitations, suffering and immense privation. This orphanage is not very different from a prison. Mental disorder cases increase day by day.

During savage fighting between the Wahdat and Sayyaf parties in the Afshar area in 1994, the Afshar orphanage in Khoshhal Khan Mina was seriously damaged. There were 5000 orphans in this orphanage. Out of them only 40 were taken by the government and the rest were killed, raped, kidnapped or taken to bases for sexual pleasure by the brutal Wahdat party and other Jehadi "brothers".

The Islamic government took the forty orphans to Sitara Kindergarten in 3rd Microrian, but after the start of fighting between Gulbuddin, Dostum and Rabbani, the government carried them to Taimani, which was still under its control, and then to Tahiae Maskan. A few girls aged fourteen, namely Freshta, Maliha, Farida and Mariam who were in Khalq and Parcham orphanages are now living in the kindergarten. Their suffering and misery are much greater then the rest of the boys and girls. They complain of the inhumane behavior of those in charges, and in particular are afraid of being married to Jehadis. Every day they are warned that "we will marry you and will get rid of you soon".

The conditions of other children are pitiable. Generally no attention has been paid to their health, clothes and cleanliness. There are no bathrooms and children smell badly. Out of every four, one is infected with a disease. They have no recreational equipment, and the orphanage ground is like a dry island with out any greenness. Qazi Faiz Mokhtar Badakhshani is the head of the orphanage, and has relations with Jehadi thieves. He gets huge amounts of money from humanitarian NGOs. Children say, "They give us good food and dresses only the days foreigners come to help, the rest of the days neither do we have enough food nor clothes."

Mariam is a 14-year old girl from Qara Bagh district of Parwan province. Her father was a Mujahid (freedom fighter) who was killed during the resistance. Her mother married and left her. She doesn't know who brought her to this place four years back. She said, "It's been almost four years since I started living here. Nobody comes to visit me, I have forgotten all my relatives." Once she tried to escape but was caught by the staff and was beaten badly with a gun.

One of the girls said, "Sometime back Jamila, a 14-year old girl, succeeded in escaping from the window."

Rape of a 70-year old man and the self-immolation of his daughter

On the July 5, 1995, Mah Zari, the 25-year old daughter of Abdul Hameed set fire to herself with oil in Khwaja Isa village. Since Mah Zari had married Mohammad Arif, son of Mohammad Omar from the same village, she had been under stress. She was not allowed to bring water from the stream, where other women were taking water from, and was not allowed to greet her neighbors, relatives and her husband's friends. Her husband's second wife would not give her food most of the time. She had to stay hungry all day till one of the neighbors sent some bread through their children secretly.

One day Mah Zari's father went to meet his daughter who was sick. The husband who was working under senator Sher Ahmed Rabbani wasn't at home as usual.

Mah Zari wanted her father to take her to a doctor because she couldn't afford it herself. The father agreed and took his daughter to the city with a borrowed donkey from the neighbors. On the way back they stayed in Mah Zari's uncle's house in Kohjar village.

At this time when Mohammad Arif learnt that his wife had left the house without his permission, he asked one of the Jehadi groups to go and find Abdul Hameed and Mah Zari, dead or alive, and to bring them back to the village that night. After a few hours the Jehadi group succeeded in finding them.

It was 2 a.m when they sent Mah Zari to her home and took 70-year old Abdul Hameed with a motorcycle to a place that is 300 meters away from Kohjar village. They took the old man to a house and after beating and gang raping him, stuck a stick inside his bottom, tied his hands, hung a stone from his neck and left him like that till morning. The next day when Mah Zari learnt about her father being raped and tortured, she decided to get rid of her gradual death and painful life forever by burning herself, but neighbors intervened and saved the half burnt Mah Zari from death.

Robbery next to the security agency of Gulbuddinis

On February 1, 1994, a garment store in Sarshahi of Ningarhar province belonging to Fakhruddin, was robbed. The shop had stock costing about 200 million Afghanis and was located twenty meters from a security agency. Qari, a Gulbuddini commander, was responsible for that agency.

The next day, the shopkeepers of Hawz-e-Khushk, Pashtoonistan Road, Mukhabirat Square and Talashi Square went on a strike but the ruling Jehadi thieves paid no attention to their protest.

Trafficking by Younis Qanooni

On April 28, 1996, a bus loaded with 250 Kalashnikovs was discovered by a Jehadi group in Mahipar and retained. Later on it was identified that the weapons belonged to Qanooni and were on their way to Pakistan to be sold.

Unchastity of a Wahdati (from Akbari's Band)

Ghulam Sakhi Wasiq, one of the commanders of Wahdat Party and a member of the central committee, has been educated in religious studies in Iran. He has committed countless crimes against the people of Jaghoori and had relations with a prostitute called Zahra (who is wife of Wasiq's bodyguard named Abbas and also mother of Mohammad Ali) from Loman.

Although he had a wife, he married another girl and bought her a house in Mahtab Qala that cost 20 million Afghanis, and then appointed Aziz, brother of his new wife, as a commander in one of his gangs.

Stoning to death or 40 million Afghanis?

On May 20, 1996, Qamaruddin, citizen of Joyen district in Farah province was put in prison on charges of committing homosexuality. Maulawi Yahya,

governor of Joyen, threatened to have him stoned to death unless he paid 40 million Afghanis for his freedom.

Mohammed Zarif, cousin of Qamaruddin, arranged for that amount of money but on the way another thief called Mullah Shah Mohammed, who is a commander in Joyen, arrested him in Joy Laftan.

When he got to know about the transfer of money he took him to the capital of Farah so that he could take another cut of money, accusing him of giving a bribe.

Dog fighting in Tashqorghan

On the first day of Eid (April 30, 1996) a severe fight started between Omar and Badal, commanders of Dostum, and Majeed Padshah Khan commander from the Gulbuddin party in Khulm district of Tashqorghan.

As a result, all the shops were looted and put on fire by the Jehadi thieves. 25 people were killed and a lot more were injured and had to leave their houses.

Homosexuality by Sayyafis

On the first of July 1996, Mohammed Haroon, one of the heads of Said Alam (commander of Sayyaf in Arghande village of Paghman district), raped one of his workers named Talib. The boy informed his family and they shot and killed Mohammed Haroon. Right now Talib is in the prison of Paghman district.

Dog fighting of Nuhzat and Nasr

Members of Nuhzat from Sangmasha and Sia Zamin were disarmed and some of them escaped to Quetta. On May 2, 1996, armed men of Wasiq from Nuhzat attacked the Loman area but they were defeated.

One of the men in charge called "Amre Shash Par" was killed and the rest retreated to the Zardaloo area. When the Nasr Party took over in Loman, they looted people's houses, claiming they were hiding Wasiq.

Woman, victim of the dog fighting of "brothers"

In early July 1996, Sayed Talib, a commander of the Nasr Party attacked the house of a Hezb-e-Islami member in Dahne Kharwal in order to kidnap him.

His young daughter fought the criminals to rescue her father. They tried hard to free themselves from her hands but couldn't, so one of the cruel men shot her in the head and took her father with them. The day after, members of Hezb-e-Islami attacked the house of a member of the Nasr Party in the same area in revenge.

They kidnapped a girl. Her family knows nothing about her yet.

Crime at Gul-e-Surkh (Red Flower) celebration

On April 12, 1996, at the Gul-e-Surkh celebrations, seven women and girls were kidnapped and killed after they were raped.

Six dead bodies were found in the Shadian Desert in Mazar.

Junbish Party announced to the people of Mazar through television that the girls and women who go to such occasions should take their own security; in this way they allow armed groups to continue their crimes.

"Democratic and legal" theft

On April 20, 1996, Wahdat Party collected 75 million Afghanis from shopkeepers in Mazar by force of gun in the name of celebrating April 28th, and on April 23rd they demanded another big amount for the camping committee of April 28th celebrations. Despite the people's protest, they collected that amount at gunpoint.

Preparation for dog fighting in Jaghoori

In early May 1996, Mullah Salman from the Hezb-e-Islami Party and Waqas from Nuhzat, came to Angoori in Jaghoori to activate military bases for

Gulbuddin's party in Pato, despite strong objections from the people of that area.

Waqas joined Mullah Salman just to use his military forces for cleaning up the Sangmasha area. Bashi Habib Hotqool also joined them in this dog fighting.

"Shura-e-Nezari" Crime

In January 1995, Anar Gul, the only breadwinner for four children and her old mother in Parwan province was kidnapped by armed Jehadis of Shura-e-Nezar while coming home from the burial ceremony of her relative who had been kidnapped and then killed by Jehadis. Her relatives found her dead body after four days. She had also been gang raped by the brutal Jehadis.

Payam-e-Zan, Issue No. 44 (September 1996)

Tax gathering by Abdullah Anwari

After Akbari's defeat, Abdul Anwari form the Wahdat Party was selected as governor of Jaghoori. He created a group to collect tax from shopkeepers, cars and properties of people.

They demanded four lac Afghanis from Ismat, a shopkeeper whose shop supplies were not more then two lac Afghanis. Ismat begged them that the total cost of the shop was much lesser than the money they asked for, that they might as well take the shop key, but they didn't listen to Ismat and beat him so badly he died.

Disappearance of two women on the way

On December 18th, armed men of Commander Ahmed Daie, relative of Dostum, kidnapped two women by taking them out of a cart by force. Nobody knows what happened to them.

Dog hunting of Dostum

A year ago, Amina was kidnapped by Zargi, the hunting dog of Dostum in Mazar. She died after a few days from the continuous raping by Zargi and his group. The criminals put the dead body inside a bag and dropped it into a well. After some time people discovered the dead body and informed the security forces. The whole process of taking a dead body out of the well was shown live on television. The same criminal killed a family of five in Haji Ayub Square in Mazar and stole all their belongings.

Zargi killed his old enemy Khoday Dad, financer in charge of the northern area. He was arrested and put in the prison of Shibirghan. On Novermber 25, 1996, Lal Pahlawan sent Zargi's three sisters, namely Nabila, Arifa and Shafiqa, who had always been at his service, to Dostum to ask for forgiveness of their brother. He was soon released and armed once more.

Behind the scene traitors of Dostum's Junbish

Dostum's main advisers include cadres of Khalq, Parcham and Groh-e-Kar (Work Group). The most important ones are going back and forth between Moscow, Tashkent and Mazar. Military and civil affairs are supervised by Babrak and Najib period generals. They are also heads of different departments and even religious scholars or "gray bearded elders", as Junbhishis call them. These people would create and expand differences among people of different ethnicities and followers of different religions. By doing so, they can, on one hand, continue their parasitical life and on the other hand, unleash their wild hatred against our ill-fated people.

People who have killed thousands of our countrymen are hired as if they have done nothing wrong and are special advisers to Dostum's commanders and other military officers. For instance Jalil Porshor, a murderer and notorious KHADI, who is the director and security chief of Northern Zone from Babrak's era, is working as an advisor with Said Nadir Nadiri.

Engineer Ahmad Uzbak, a relative and one of the trustable men of Dostum, is a Parchami of Najib's time. Since the formation of Junbish, he has been

working in high ranking administrative posts such as being director of the Power and Electricity Department and assistant administrator of the province and currently attends Dostum's formal meetings with the representatives of foreign countries. This man led Junbish's delegation in their talks with the Taliban in Kandahar sometime ago. Ahmad, an Arab from Sholgara and a Parchami from Herat's Hezbullah, was appointed as assistant of the provincial administration department by Hezb-e-Wahdat, then imprisoned by Hezb-e-Wahdat last year and he was targeted twice with bomb blasts in his office which he survived, but he has been pronounced innocent.

Zimarai Kamgar, after graduating from Mazar's Mechanical Institute is working as a mechanic in the research department of Mazar. During the reign of the Russian puppets he was presented to KHAD by his cousins, Paikar and Sadique, who were important Parchamis. While serving in the military in Hairatan Port and being a driver for the Russians, he established a relationship with the K.G.B and smuggled goods for the Russians to Mazar and Hairatan.

After Junbish's domination, taking advantage of his previous relationships, he started a business and through it joined the mafia. Currently he is one of the main economic and trade and mafia dealers of Dostum and has occupied Mazar's Manure and Power Department with the help of his boss Dostum.

Azizullah "Kargar", a main member of the Work Group is currently head of the party's organizational branches and state's administrative bodies in the Northern Zone working as Junbish's assistant with Dostum. Said Kamil is one of the Parchamis of Najib's era who was working in KHAD. He was previously security chief of Mazar and is currently security chief of the Northern Zone and security advisor to Dostum. Said Noorullah and his cousin Said Younis both are KHADIs of Najib's time. The former is security chief of Mazar and the latter is managing director of Dostum's office and both are considered the most loyal soldiers of the "general". Noorullah Hamsangar, political secretary of Junbish, Dostum's spokesman and author of political speeches and analysis, is a Parchami from Najib's era. Raees Abdul Wahab was head of a military base in Jabha-e-Padar Watan (Father Land Front) during Najib's time, and is currently head of the elder's council of Balkh province. There is also Abdul Raoof Begi, head of one of the party's main divisions, Majeed Rozi, commander of division 8 and military assistant of the Northern Zone, General Yousuf, head of political

affairs and spokesman of Junbish, and Humayoun Fouzi and Jora Baig are military Parchamis from Najib's time.

Iran and its puppets

On October 28, 1996 a huge Iranian cargo plane carrying weapons and ammunition landed in Bamyan. Later these weapons and ammunitions were transferred by 120 Kamaz vehicles to Parwan province and were delivered to Hezb-e-Wahdat's men.

Payam-e-Zan, Issue No. 45 (March 1997)

The fundamentalists and the Afghan women

Nasima, daughter of Brigadier Khalil and resident of Darabad in Farah, was living in Kabul. She was engaged. On her wedding night while she was returning from a beauty parlor, she was abducted by armed Jehadis. She was held for several days and after being dishonored she was dropped near her house. Nasima attempted suicide and was taken to a hospital and saved. Her ill-fated family couldn't stay any longer in Kabul, so they left the city.

- Farzana, daughter of Engineer Aqa Mohammad and resident of Darabad village of Farah province was living in Khair Khana, Kabul. Her husband was a military officer. Fifteen months ago while she was taking 800,000 Afghanis to her parents she was abducted by Jehadis. She was pregnant. Her relatives looked for her everywhere but in vain. Then they became frustrated and her husband left Kabul. Now he is in Farah and suffering from psychological problems.

- On November 29, 1995, the village of Shekhmtur of Charbulak district came between the crossfire of two rival groups. As a result, 21 people, including 9 women and 4 children, died and fighters of the Khanju commander captured the village. They kidnapped two girls, one was fourteen and the other was

seventeen. They were taken to the headquarters of Khanju. There they were gang raped and then released after 24 hours.

- During the winters of 1994, two girls were kidnapped from a wedding ceremony held in Ghazni by one of the commanders of Amin. The parents asked Amin's Security Chief for help. After three days the girls were found. As the kidnappers were Amin's men, the "chief" killed both girls because it could cause trouble for Amin himself. In a report Amin said, "The girls were prostitutes so we killed them."

- In September 1995, a nine year old girl was abducted and raped by a Jehadi commander in Jalmato village of Ghazni province. The family of the girl asked the Jehadi authorities for help. The Jehadi Shura Council knew they could not afford to admit that a Jehadi brother had committed the heinous crime. They soon found two scapegoats and had the innocent shepherds hanged. When the hangmen were taking down the corpses of the two innocent shepherds, it was discovered that one of them was still alive and could be resuscitated. So they had him sent to a nearby hospital where he was dispatched with a lethal injection because it is not legal to hang a person twice.

-On July 15, 1995 two women were injured by rockets launched by the Taliban in Wazir Akbar Khan, Kabul. They were picked up by Jehadis in a car with the excuse of taking them to a hospital. The next day their dishonored and naked dead bodies were found on a hill in the area.

-On April 14, 1996, Hazrat, who was a well-known Gurgury commander and resident of Kala Balkh district, attacked Arnagha village. People in the village evacuated the women and young boys and girls. A lady who was leaving the village had a baby in her arms. The baby started crying and the poor woman, in order to save other members of the family had no other option but to leave her child in the bushes. The baby is now missing.

"The Burst of the 'Islamic Government' Bubble in Afghanistan"
An English publication of RAWA
(Issue No. 2, January 1997)

In 1999, RAWA conducted a research about prostitutes in Kabul whose lives had turned worse than ever under the Islamic governments. Prostitution had rifed under the Jehadi and Taliban rule, with more women being forced into the dirty profession as they had no other choice to earn a living. Later on, RAWA arranged for literacy courses and income-generating projects for some of the women to become self-sufficient.

The story of the life of a prostitute who lived in Qalayee of Ashiqan Arifan area. (L) daughter of (GH. R), originally from Behsood of Ghazni Province is a prostitute who works in the Hashuqan-o-Harifan area. She told her story as follows, "My father was an ordinary government worker. I lived with my two brothers and three sisters in a leased house in Karte Sakhi. I have studied up to twelfth grade and I am of Hazara ethnicity. It has been two years that I am working with Ko-ko. The women around the brothel call me (Gh). My elder brother joined the military force during Najeeb's regime and later went to Russia. My younger brother worked as an apprentice for a mechanic. He was later conscripted and killed in action. From childhood we were living in poverty, and day to day survival was a struggle. My father never got a raise because of his Hazara background until he finally retired. My mother worked as a servant in Kabul's maternity hospital. I was a student at that time. During Najeeb's regime, despite our poverty, we were living a quite life and were thanking God for the piece of bread we earned. When the non-Muslim government of Rabbani and the Jehadi demons took power, the Hezb-e-Wahdat established their military check posts around Karte-Seh and started to control the Hazara localities of Kabul. The treacherous Wahdat Party was in conflict with other Jehadi organizations and because of that all Hazaras were restricted in their part of the city. We could not walk around the city freely. The fighting between the Wahdat Party and other Jehadi organizations intensified, so I was unable to attend school. In the mean time we had nothing to eat. The war destroyed most of the houses in our area, but our family was unable to move to another area. My brother was accused of being a communist and was regularly threatened by the Wahdatis. One day some men from Wahdat party took away my brother. Because my brother was a lieutenant in the previous regime the Wahdatis forced him to work for them in their military check posts and was later given

the responsibilities of the check post in Khane Ilm Wa Farhang and Barikote Cinema. The Wahdatis were forcing each Hazara family to give a young man to fight for them or pay in cash. Wahdatis said that they had to hunt one Afghan (people of Pashtun ethnic are usually called Afghan) and one Paghmani (a resident of Paghman, a district in Kabul) every day."

"The Wahdatis asked my brother to prepare a feast for them. I remember they had captured a person from Paghman that day. They took his bicycle and the few hundred thousand Afghanis that he was carrying and then started beating him. I don't know what they did to him later. They divided the money and gave my brother his share. They put some money aside for the feast. The feast was organized and a number of people with long hair and beards came to our house. They laughed at my brother because of our old carpets and furniture. They called my brother 'Mr. Rezaie' and encouraged him to loot someone from the Paghman area. They reminded him that the people of Paghman have done so many wrongs to our people, that he should capture one and get some cash from him. 'Killing them is not a sin,' they said. My brother wasn't used to such acts, but the Wahdatis forced him to steal and to commit murder. Accused of being a communist and also having worked in the army of Najeeb's regime, if my brother had resisted them they would have definitely killed him. Hundreds of other men like my brother were killed for not following the orders of the Wahdat Party."

"The feast was prepared in our house. I served the food and everyone praised my hard work. However, that feast was the beginning of my nightmares. Among the guests was a man by the name of Qiadi. I noticed that he was staring at me in a lustful way. I didn't pay much attention to it and didn't mention it to my brother. From that day Qiadi started to come to our house. Because he was a powerful man in the Wahdat Party my brother was scared of him. He accused my brother of being a communist and was always threatening him. He said that my brother had to pay for his past sins. Despite the fact that my brother was armed and was working in a military post he had no real power and could not do anything about that man."

"The fighting intensified. One day we received the message that my brother had been severely injured and that we were to visit him along with Qiadi in the surgical hospital. My mother and I started crying and wanted to go to hospital

together, but they stopped my mother from going to the hospital. I was very nervous and could not decide what to do. My brother was everything to us. Anyway, I left the house along with Qiadi. It was late in the afternoon and Qiadi asked me to go with him to the party's health center first so that he could get the necessary medical material as there was none in the hospital. I wasn't aware of the ominous trap that he was setting for me. The truth was that my brother had been sent to another area on that day. We drove to a deserted house and he asked me to wait in one of the rooms for a few minutes. Without thinking I accepted it, I wasn't thinking about anything other than my brother."

"Qiadi entered from another door and laughingly told me that I shouldn't worry, nothing had happened, my brother had gone for a mission to another area. He said that he wanted me to rest for a while and be his guest for the night. That is when I learned of the filthy intentions of that treacherous Jehadi, but there was no way to escape. Like a small bird, I was in the claws of that bushy savage. I fought him very hard but to no avail. Then I begged him to let me go. I kissed his foot, I reminded him of my brother, my mother, and the food that he had eaten in our house, but it didn't work. Then I started struggling again. He asked his cook by the name of Qurban to help him. Together they tied my hands. Then he threw his cook out of the room with abuses. He told him that this is the way the communists should be punished. I was struggling till very late at night but there was no one that could help me. The house was deserted with all the furniture looted. Treacherous Qiadi finally got what he wanted and raped me."

"Later I told him that I would be his wife and wouldn't complain to anyone. At first he said no but then he swore on Quran that he would if I put myself at his will. He raped me a number of times that night. In the morning I told him that my mother might be dying from grief for her son, we should go and tell her and he should also ask her for my hand. He agreed and said he would do it after breakfast. I was wrong. I was a prisoner in that room for another twenty nights or so. Treacherous Qiadi met my brother every day and pretended that he shared my family's grief. He told them that they had received a false report of my brother's injury and said, 'I left your sister in some street and I went to the frontline.' He blamed my disappearance on Sunni Muslims. Qiadi had forced the owner of the house in which I was a prisoner out of the house. It was situated behind the Ministry of Trade. All the furniture of the house had been looted. I begged him

every day and asked for mercy. I reminded him of God but he did not even believe in God. Without a slight bit of humanity, he did whatever he wanted. One day he brought two other men with him and asked me to serve them food without wearing any clothes. I told him that he had sworn on Quran and Prophet Ali that he would ask for my hand and would marry me. He ridiculed me and looked at his friends and told them that at the end he will give me to his cook, and then they laughed. That night all three of them raped me till I don't know what time in the night. Qiadi freed me after two months and he moved somewhere else."

"My mother and brother had lost all their hopes for me when I entered our house. I told them everything. My mother cried. My brother said that he would find Qiadi and kill him like a dog. But I stopped him. I told him that my life has been destroyed, that he shouldn't destroy his life. He did not have the power to fight that murderer and rapist. We were still not able to move from that area because the Wahdat Party had decreed that Hazaras should not move from their houses. A few days later Qiadi returned to our house with some armed men. My brother was not at home. He asked my mother 'Where was that communist who has joined the ranks of Mujahideen? These communists are the reason these Mujahideen are going astray. They should be killed.' My mother wanted to say something about me but he kicked her and ordered his men to throw her in a car. My shouting didn't help at all. Our house was in a deserted place. Because of our poverty and the cruelty of the Wahdatis we were the only ones left there. This time Qiadi took me to the Barikote Cinema check post where some women and girls of Sunni Muslim background were imprisoned as well. They were being treated very badly and were dying under the torture of Wahdatis. I was forced to cook for them during the day and was raped repeatedly during the night. This continued for ten to twelve days. Other women imprisoned in other rooms of the cinema were treated even worse than I was. Wahdatis didn't care that I was one of their Hazaras, they were committing their acts on whomever they could lay their hands on. They said that I had the taste of a communist. 'These communists are something else.' Repeated rapes and sometimes gang rapes had wrecked my physical and mental health. I witnessed, with my own eyes, how other women were being raped. They brought people's wives and sisters on different pretexts and raped them. I missed my mother and brother and I did not know where they were. There was no way to escape and even if I had escaped I could have gotten

caught by even more savage wolves. I got pregnant but they still raped me every night. My brother learnt of my whereabouts but he couldn't do anything. I learned that he later left for Iran. My mother went with one of her relatives, but I don't know where."

"When they let me go I started working in other Hazaras' houses. My stomach was getting bigger. The husband and wife of the house I was living in got suspicious. I told them everything but they threw me out of the house. I aborted the child with lots of difficulties and got sick."

"A person by the name of Sakhi Dad Karbalaie, who knew my family, let me stay in his house for a while. They started to treat me badly and I left the house. The disgrace that I had received at the hands of Wahdat Party had taken everything and everyone from me. Destitution forced me to stay in our neighborhood, which resulted in my brother working for the Wahdatis. At the end I was left with two choices. I could sell myself or commit suicide. That is how I became a prostitute in this Quala (brothel). I have nowhere to go. All the doors are closed to me. My life is the result of the wrongs that the foul Jehadis have done to me. They turned our lives into an agony."

About her work she said, "I am still young, not more than 27. I don't have any savings from my income. At least I am not supporting a family like most others around here. I don't know about my future. Because of my ethnicity I don't get many clients as Hazaras don't work in the same brothel as Pashtuns and Tajiks."

"When I was thrown out of that house I wandered the streets for a while. I met auntie (Ko-ko). She is very experienced and she understood that I had no place to go to. She offered me to stay with her for the night. She said that she would protect me like her daughter. When we entered her house she introduced me to the others as their new colleague. Then I knew where I had come. From that day I have worked here."

Another prostitute lived in the Qalae Zaman Khan area of Kabul. In one of the brothels in the Qala-e-Zaman Khan area, two young women by the names of (L) and (Q) are working. (Q) was away looking for clients or/and begging while (L) told (Q)'s story. "She was a virtuous widow who was dragged into prostitution by bad luck, poverty and the Jehadis' civil war. She lost her husband and was

alone with two children and because she had no one, poverty and begging turned her into a prostitute. She has no one to help her. Her husband died after a few months of being ill, despite the medical treatment that they were getting by selling their furniture. (Q) was alone. She lived with lots of difficulties. In Kabul no one helps you. Either you die of hunger or live as we do.

The civil war among the Jehadis was raging in Kabul. Dostum's soldiers had their posts around Jada and Chaman areas. (Q) used to go there to gather the leftover food from the soldiers."

(L) paused and then continued by telling her own story. "I used to wear an old veil and looked for food at the military posts. They were used to me coming and going and left some rice and bread. It was enough for my kids. I hid under my veil and they didn't know that I was young. They used to call me 'mother' and they told me 'Come here every day, we will leave you some food.' One afternoon I went to one of the military posts at the end of Jaada, my veil was not covering my face. Two of Dostum's militia told me to go to the back of the building where they had left me some rice and cooking oil. I was happy and walked to the back of the building. I opened one of the rooms; nothing was in there. Suddenly, both of them attacked me from behind and raped me.

To keep my honor I left the area without making a sound. I didn't leave the house for a few days. Because my children were hungry I sent them to beg for food. They were very young and no one was giving them anything. I was forced to go out and beg again.

Begging wasn't enough. Hunger is a very bad thing. I couldn't put up with my two children asking for food. I saw no other way. Poverty turned me into a prostitute. Those Jehadis who raped me are another reason to push me into this filthy job. Now whenever I get a chance, I sell myself to men, secretly from my two children." (L) added about (Q), " Now she is working with me in this brothel. Whenever we don't get any customers she goes out and begs for money or finds customers through taxies.

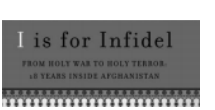
She goes during the night. Her two children are getting older and she tries very hard to hide it from them. She knows a taxi driver who always takes her with him."

Full report: www.rawa.org/rospi.htm

www.pz.rawa.org

6.

DOCUMENTS FROM DIFFERENT SOURCES



Rocket and artillery attacks on Kabul killed as many as 2000 people, the report says and adds that factional fighting disrupted humanitarian assistance efforts. About freedom of speech and press in Afghanistan, it said> 'the interim government claimed to have given the right to free press and speech but lacked the authority to protect freedom of expression throughout the country. President Rabbani's Jamiat-i-Islami used radio and television to further its own goals to the exclusion of other groups.'

'A number of faculty members from the Kabul university reportedly left after the change of government fearing persecution due to their views or previous political affiliations,' reports reveals.

State department's report also noticed that 'women wearing Western dress in Kabul were sent home to change to traditional Islamic dress. They were forced to leave positions in various ministries. Women reporters on television and radio were removed.'

"The Frontier Post", January 23, 1993

Mujeebur Rehman is 12 –year- old. Hew was playing in his house when a rocket burst in and blew off his left hand. But he is one of the lucky ones. A jeep from the International Red Cross happened to be passing and his father covered in his son's blood was able to get him evacuated to one of the few hospitals still operating. Just getting the victims to the hospital is one of the main problems.

Pushing handcrafts and bicycles laden with whatever possessions they could salvage, cores of thousands of people have also had to flee their home in the battle areas. Many of Their houses have been looted. There is nobody to help the many displaced persons. They curse the fighters but many also blame the outside world for abandoning them.

"The Muslim", March 4, 1993

One thousand people have been killed and more than 3000 injured in fighting that has raged in the Afghan Capital Kabul over the last two weeks, a Brussels-based medical aid group said Thursday, says an AFP report.

'We even had to perform operations in the basement,' he said. His report said downtown Kabul had been pounded with constant rocket and mortar attacks since Monday. 'The center and the south of city are devastated,' he said.

Afghan Radio reported that rocket attacks Wednesday killed at least 14 and injured 79 others in Kabul.

Afghan Mujahideen chiefs are battling to take control of Kabul with dissident leaders Gulbadddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-i-Islami fighters battling forces behind Defence minister Ahmad Shah Masood.

A small boy who was killed in the rocket attack was being removed from the scene. Blood spots were visible on the road near a car where another teenager was dying. The entrances to the hospitals were blocked by the crowds of relatives. Hospitals were running out of beds. In the heavy artillery exchanges between the government forces and dissident factions the city is cut off from the surrounding areas and most of the casualties could not be brought to the hospitals.

"The Muslim", February 5, 1993

Another outcome of the Islamabad Accord a many Afghans pointed out was that those who could kill the most were being rewarded. They felt Rabbani and Hekmayar forces had fought mostly against each other and were responsible for most of the killings and destruction of Kabul had now been rewarded with the best portfolios in the government. Isn't it an invitation to the others to practice such tactics in the hop of better rewards, they ask. The question definitely needs some soul research.

"The News", March 15, 1993

At least 54 people were killed and more than 100 injured in one of the most severe rocket attacks on Kabul, with government forces replying with a heavy bombardment of opposition forces Monday, Radio Kabul said.

The Hezb-i-Islami faction of dissident leader Bulbaddin Hekmayar fired more than 200 rockets on Kabul hitting many residential districts, the broadcast mentioned here said.

Several public and private buildings were set on fire by the barrages, the radio said, adding that the casualties were high in the Deh Mazang area of Kabul where a mosque was also destroyed.

Two rockets exploded close to a bridge over the Kabul River not far from the city zoo, killing more than 20 civilians, according to troops in the area. All that was left of one male victim was a pool of blood and the twisted remains of his bicycle.

"The Frontier Post", February 9, 1993

Afghan government troops guarding a bridge over the Kabul River carried the Boy's broken body off the road, wrapped it in an old army blanket and at a loss to what to do, just stashed the corpse in a vacant electricity sub-station.

A rocket fired by a rebel faction of Mujahideen exploded in the street early in the morning. Shattering the boy's body as he rode his bicycle to the bazaar.

Like thousands of others, the boy had been caught in the mangle of conflict between Afghan Defence Ministry forces and opposing Hezb-i-Islami faction led by hardliner Gulbaddin Hekmayar, who have been battling each other for nearly two weeks in and around Kabul.

The cost to civilians is not only death but also the destruction of their homes and the loss of livelihood.

'I have put my family in a mosque. We are not in the way. There is less praying these days,' said a man who had braved the frontline to retrieve clothes from his abandoned home.

"The Muslim", February 1, 1993

Over 80 persons were killed in Afghan Capital Kabul on Sunday in the worst series of attacks since the unofficial truce was agreed two weeks ago.

The number of injured runs into hundreds.

Twelve people were killed when a shell hit a bock of flats and there were heavy casualties when two rockets landed in front of a mosque just before prayers.

Earlier a mortar attack on a crowded vegetable market in the center of the city killed at least 14 people.

A BBC correspondent in Kabul said two rockets landed in front of the mosque in the city center just before prayers. The area was crowded with men and children selling water for ritual bathing.

A local commander said he loaded dead and injured into a bus. They were people trying to earn a little money. Children were also victims of a rocket which smashed in flats in the residential areas. Outside the flats, the correspondent saw a small boy with blood on hi trousers. He was the sole survivor of the family of eight who lived in the flat.

Another man said that three of his sons and wife had been killed by the same rocket as they sat outside washing clothes and preparing food.

It was the first time since August that Kabul's main bazaar had been targeted and the first time since early 1990, that an attack was made on a mosque.

Shoppers fled the bazaar and merchants pulled down their shutters while others washed the blood from the street after the bloodiest attack on Kabul since the government and its dissident opponents began observing and informal ceasefire on Feb 15.

In the morning two mortars landed in the vegetable market in the city killing and injuring a large number of civilians. Kabul's five hospitals reported more than 100 injured and 35 deaths today. One doctor said the casualties have come from all over the city.

"The Muslim", March 1, 1993

According to a Hizb source the chief of the Hizb-i-Islami, Hekmayar himself had designed a surface-to-surface missile BM 1. His ordnance factories are said to be producing this missiles in a large quantity.

Hizb also ordered the manufacturing of BM 1 missiles for Far East country. 'We believe in mass production and we do not take much care in quality of our home-made arms,' said Hizb official.

"The Frontier Post", September 15, 1991

'Najibullah was a good man. Even his dog was more honorable than these mujahideen' said an angry old man.

"The Muslim", February 1, 1993

Kabul AFP- some 100 hundred women protested outside the UN mission here Monday seeking the return of husbands and brothers taken prisoner as others described days of looting, rape and murder in the Afshar quarter of this city.

The protest and atrocities followed the recapture Thursday of the Shiite quarter by the pro-government Ittehad, a Saudi Arabia backed faction, and the defence ministry troops of Ahmad Shah Masood from the Shiite Hizb-i- Wahdat forces.

The killing began Thursday some hours before dusk, and continued into the next day, according to witnesses gathered in a mosque in the neighboring quarter of Taemani, refugees from the area said.

A government official dismissed the reports of atrocities as rumours designed to slander the government.

'There were 12 of them, some carrying rocket launchers on their shoulders. They broke down the door, then they mad advances to my sister and me,' said Shahla, a young nurse. 'My father tried to stop them, but hey hit him and then tortured him. They cut off one of his feet and both his hands. In the courtyard there was a big dog belonging to one of the commanders. One of them threw my father's hands to the dog.'

By late afternoon Sunday the killings were over, but the Ittehad mujahideen still scoured the place for anything to seal.

A mujahideen guerrilla, carrying a silver goblet in one hand and a rosary in the other, said the bodies had been taken to a nearby valley. 'If you stay here too long, you too will be robbed.' Another threatened an AFP correspondent and photographer.

In his looted shop a man who had returned to salvage what had not been stolen also spoke of the killings.

In the Taemani mosque a young girl was curled up against the shoulder of a refugee. Her mother and father have been killed, 'since then she has not wanted to move,' the refugee said with tears in his eyes.

Another woman, Fairoza, showed a Koran damaged by a bullet. She said she had brandished it at the aggressors in vain, her husband had his throat cut and her three girls were killed.

Some 300 families have taken refuge in the Taemani mosque. The are living in appalling conditions like thousands of other refugees in Kabul who have to survive without running water, electricity, heat, or adequate food supplies.

"The Frontier Post", February 16, 1993

Senator Qazi Hussain Ahmad said Saudi Arabia provided millions of dollars to Soviet Union in order to be used for the stability of Dr Najibullah regime in Kabul.

He said government had recognized the Baltic States because America had accepted their independence. 'Pakistan government is not independent in its foreign policy and is entirely dependent on America,' he remarked.

His anti-American attitude took him to the Libyan leader Col Qaddafi who had been helping him till his recent retreat against the United States. Qaddafi has also been lobbying for Hekmayar in Moscow and he had planned to arrange Hekmatyar's meeting with Gorbachev on the Afghan issue.

Hekmatyar's contacts with the Islamic movements in various part of the Muslim world are no more secret. He has been providing training to the militant

youth of various Muslim countries he is in touch with the leaders of Islamic Front of Algeria, militants of Sudan and Tunisia.

"The Frontier Post", September 13, 1991

The Afghan commanders, religious scholars and elders have strongly suggested that Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Iran should stop meddling in the political affairs of Afghanistan and let the Afghans resolve the current crisis in manner to reach a consensus regarding a national government of their own choice without any foreign interference.

A vast silent majority of the Afghans, it claimed had been witness to the fact that some of their neighboring countries were trying to maintain their political monopoly in Afghanistan through their favorite Afghan organizations and parties. The Afghans, it added firmly believed that such favoritism could not stop the ongoing chaos and bloodshed in Afghanistan. Rather it will harm the existing goodwill among the neighboring countries in future.

"The Muslim", March 5, 1993

Three angry, panic-stricken Afghan women running from a clothing factory blamed the attack on all mujahideen in general.' They are dogs-they pretend to be Muslims but they are nothing,' one cried.

"The Frontier Post", January 7, 1993

Nine Arabs were killed whereas the same numberwere reportedly injured by the government forces in Kabul. According to sources in Islamabad, the Arabs were stated to be affiliated with the Hekmatyar's Hizb-i-Islami Afghainstan HIA. They were killed in skirmish between the government forces and HIA men in southern part of Afghan capital on Saturday. The sources further added that a massive crackdown by the government has been initiated against Arabs residing in Afghanistan.

"The Frontier Post", February 15, 1993

More than 5000 Burmese Muslim fighters have so far been trained by the Afhan Jehadi groups mainly the Hezb-i-Ialami of Hekmayar, the Jamiat-i-Islami

Afghanistan of Prof.Burhanuddin Rabbani and Ittehad-i-Islami of Abdur Rab Rasool Sayyaf.

"The Frontier Post", March 15, 1993

The chief of Hezb-i-Islami Afghanistan, Engineer Gulbuddin Hekmatyar has welcomed the announcement of Pakistan of not allowing the use of its soil against the Afghan government and added that he would be grateful 'if Pakistan stops CIA's interference in Afghanistan from its soil.'

"The Frontier Post", September 30, 1992

Pakistanis and diplomats say that although Mr. Hekmatyar is an anti-west person yet when the United States and other countries were supplying weapons against the communists through Pakistan, a big portion of them was given to Mr. Hekmatyar.

They said that Mr. Hekmatyar had a number of supporters in the Pakistan Inter Services Intelligence which was distributing weapons among the mujahideen groups. Its reason was that Mr. Hekmatyar was a good Muslim fundamentalist and was fighting well. That why, the former ISI chief is now engaged in Kabul for the implementation of the ceasefire.

Some sources say that Mr.Hekmatyar is also supporting and assisting Islamic movements in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and enjoying good relations with them. Though relations of Pakistan government with Mr. Hekmatyar have cooled down yet Jamaat-i-Islami and some members of the ISI are still strongly supporting him. He has also established contacts and relations with some rich Arabs. Keeping these things in view, it seems that Afghanistan will remain in crisis for some time.

"The Muslim", February 21, 1993

The women complained that hundreds of girls had been abducted from their homes by armed mujahideen, held prisoner in some cases for up to 20 days, and repeatedly raped.

One 16-year-old girl protected her honor by committing suicide Monday

morning by leaping from her sixth storey window in order to escaper her would-be captors. In another reported case, a less fortunate girl, after being held for ten days and gang-raped by gunmen in Kabul, returned home and asked her brother to kill her.

The brother, an unusually enlightened Afghan male, refused to on the grounds that his sister was not at fault. The girl then went into the kitchen, took a knife, slashed her wrists and bled to death.

"The Frontier Post", February 10, 1993

The Western powers are trying to sabotage the 14 year-long Afghan Jehad and hatching conspiracies against the establishment of true Islamic government in the war-torn country.

He added that after the Peshawar Accord a new wave of destruction and bloodshed started in Afghanistan, duce to conspiracies of Western powers. This was stated by Maulana Jan Muhammad Abbasi, naib amir, Jamaat-i-Islami, who accompanied a peace delegation to Afghanistan.

"The Frontier Post", February 28, 1993

A former Pakistan military intelligence chief is in Kabul to help mediate a ceasefire between the government and rebel faction forces, a government sources stated Wednesday.

General Hamid Gul, who from 1987-89 headed Pakistan's Inter Service Intelligence ISI, which covertly trained and supplied arms to the Afghan guerrillas during their 10-year fight against the Soviet army, arrived in Kabul Tuesday.

Gul met with the chief of the National Security department Wednesday, but the talks were described as unofficial, the source said.

Shortly after the April 1992 victory of the mujahideen over the Moscow-backed Afghan communist regime, Gul arranged a meeting with rival guerrilla leaders Ahmad Shah Masood and Gubuddin Hekmatyar.

"The Frontier Post", February 11, 1993

Tierry Niquet, was robbed and murdered by a Hezb commander in the same area in 1986. Andy Skrzypkoviak's wife, Chris Gregory, is no on a jihad of her own. The question she wants raised, in the Commons and the US Congress, is why millions of dollars of CIA money are being channeled to an organization 'containing thieves and murderers.' Hezb-i-Islami is one of the oldest and biggest of the seven guerrilla parties recognized and indirectly funded by the West. Last year 600 million dollars of covert aid was earmarked for the Afghan resistance by the US Congress.

'The Americans are all impressed with him,' one baffled European diplomat says of Hekmatyar.' The more he kicks them, the more they tend to enthuse.'

Hezb co-operates closely with the Pakistani police to keep tabs on the refugee population and potential saboteurs. According to Dr Zabi Mojadadi,' Hez even arrests people in Pakistan, it has prison chambers here, it has executed people here.'

Hezb's status as the most favored guerrilla party stems from its close links with Pakistan's powers-that-be, dating back to 1974. Hekmatyar's supporters were trained and armed by Bhutto and infiltrated back into Afghanistan to destabilize the Daud regime. When the Soviets invaded five years later, the Americans wanted to know how best to help the resistance. Pakistan's military intelligence services, by then ruling the roost under General Zia, recommended Hekmatyar, whom they believed they could control.

Schools run by Hezb are organized along quasi-military lines. A Westerner just back from Afghanistan describes a 'sinister' trend which goes against what he calls the ' humaneness and dignity of traditional Afghan Islam.' There is, he says, 'a fascist-style mobilization of a very strong xenophobia, the cultivation of narrow-minded hatred against everyone except the party.'

Hekmatyar has already narrowly survived several attempts on hi life. But his party continues to receive strong backing from Pakistan and the West,

despite allegations that Hezb members are responsible for the death of a fervent supporter of the Afghan cause, Andy Skrzypkorviak.

"The Frontier Post", January 11, 1988

Enough has been said about Zia's involvement in the 'holy war'. Any further comments on this would be a mere repletion. However, it sees apt to quote from Bob Wood Word's well-known book "Veil-The Secret Wars of CIA".

The book lists General Zia as the favored ruler of CIA along the with Marcos of Philippines, Nimeiry of Sudan and a few others. On Zia's role in Afghanistan the book has this to say> 'Most crucial was President Zia's willingness to allow the CIA to funnel growing amounts of paramilitary support to the Afghan rebels through Pakistan. Casey, the CIA and Reagan administration all wanted Zia to stay in power and needed to know what was going on in his government. The CIA stations in Islamabad was one of the biggest in the world.'

"The Frontier Post", August 18, 1991

Senator Hatch, a Republican from Utah, USA, points out that 'at the same time, the US must insist that Pakistan should cut off all assistance to Gulbbuddin Hekmatyar'. '

The Hekmatyar forces have regularly attacked other resistance units. He himself even backed Saddam Hussein in the Gulf war. Instead, supplies for moderate groups and the national commanders shoora must be increased, and Islamabad must cease its efforts to control Afghanistan's political future.'

On ISI's role in Afghanistan, the US Senator comments> 'for years, Inter-Services Intelligence ISI and CIA starved mainstream resistance groups and provided a disproportionate amount of money and arms to the leaders of one fundamentalist Afghan Party, Guboddin Hekmatyar, in a gambit to put him into power. While necessity forced Afghans to fight under the leadership of anyone who had sufficient supplies during Soviet occupation, the ISI's bias has badly undercut resistance effort since Moscow's withdrawal in 1989, because rank-and- file forces refused to fight on behalf of Pakistan's client.

"The Frontier Post", January 9, 1991

The greatest tragedy is that there seems no end to the sufferings of Afghan women. As a result, the majority of the Afghan women are suffering from mental disorder and have become burden for their own parents. And Afghan refugee says that all the time is worried about his three daughters. There is no law to check crimes against women in Afghanistan. In many cases women in the recent past were raped and tortured by unknown criminals in various parts of Afghanistan.

The recovery of mass graves of women near Kabul about four months ago is a glaring proof of the sort of agony Afghan women were passing through. 'To protect the honor of my daughters, I want my daughters to be married as early as possible. No matter whether she is nine years old or 12 years old,' says a man.

A RAWA report claims that on September 15,1993 several women with worn-out dresses were seen in Bagh-e-Bala. The women, according to the report, told that they escaped from a jail, controlled by a group which was later ousted from Kabul. The report alleges that in the absence of any law, criminals break into houses of people for looting and dishonoring the women.

War has so badly devastated the Afghan nation where suffering has reached unprecedented heights. The Afghans feel so helpless-in Peshawar an Afghan refugee, Habibullah, was seen selling his two-year-old grandson. The man said that all his family members had been killed in the war. 'I am an old man and there is no one to look after the child', he says that he does not want money, but is looking for someone who could guarantee his grandson's well-being. There are numerous similar painful stories of Afghan women and children.

"Weekend Post", August 25, 1995

Women and girls were not safe. Girls were abducted by commanders and forced into marriage, that is raped. Commanders were reported to have as many as ten 'wives'. If the girls or their families objected or resisted they were killed. Many families sent their girls and women away, often to Pakistan.

Female Afghan community health workers employed by Emergency Relief

Unit, an NGO in Jalalabad, have been harassed by Shura members for working in the displaced persons camps. One female health worker who has been driven to a camp was stopped by local militia and her driver was arrested fro suspicion of immoral activities that is driving a car with a woman who is not related to him. The woman was also threatened.

"The News", November 11, 1995

A sum of 70,000 dollars has been stolen from the local office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees UNHCR, a UN official said Wednesday.

The loss is likely to hit several relief programs of the agency, which is already faces financial shortage due to decline in international donations for humanitarian work in the war-torn country. Terry Pifzner, head of the UNHCR office said> 'They have stolen from one of the poorest nations of the world,' urging investigation and 'tough action' by authorities against those responsible fro crime.

"The Frontier Post", June 20, 1996

Paktina, 30 a resident of Kabul, a higher secondary student who had to migrate to Pakistan:

We had a business of tin food and garments in Kabul. We were forced to leave Kabul by the warring groups who attacked our city, a year ago. I had three brothers, they were killed in bomb explosions. My father was murdered by unknown killers two days before we left for Pakistan.

Since we have no earning member in the family, I had to go for this dirty and disgraceful business to sustain my four sisters and our mother. When we arrived first in Peshawar, I visited many offices of aid agencies for job. But I could not have one. So, I was forced to go for the immoral means. First when I turned to this was when I took my sister to a Peshawar hospital (she did not tell which). A dispenser took me to his house. But now even this immoral way of living is not helping because it is being crowded by newcomers. Not only the Pakistanis but many of our 'Afghan brothers' are there to push us to doing this.

Danya, 18, came from Kabul along with her uncle, four years ago, a student at an Afghan school:

I have recently joined the bad women's group. About a year ago I was standing near my house in the Ganj area of Peshawar waiting for the school bus. An Afghan young man whom we knew from Kabul, came on motorcycle and offered a lift. From that time I am doing this and am earning living for my uncle and his wife. I was sent here by my parents for fear of attack by the mujahideen since I was growing up and was the only unmarried female among my sisters (3) who are lining back in Kabul.

"Diplomat", February 1994

The Amnesty International report on women in Afghanistan says:

'Armed groups have massacred defenceless women in their homes, or have brutally beaten and raped them. Scores of young women have been abducted and then raped, taken as wives by commanders or sold into prostitution. Some have committed suicide to avoid such as fate. Scores of women have reportedly disappeared and several have been stoned to death. Many women are traumatized by the horrific abuses, they have suffered or witnessed.'

The conquerors often celebrate by killing and raping women and looting property.

"The Frontier Post", August 4, 1995

Herat (AFP) – Opposition forces fighting the Taliban militia in the northwest of the country are on a rampage of looting and rape, civilians fleeing the fighting claimed.

'They set fire to our village, our cattle were slaughtered and 15 men were murdered by the Dostum soldiers,' Fazia Razm, who now lives in one of Heart's five displaced persons camps, told AFP.

"Many of the women were dishonored by the soldiers and kept being as prisoner," the woman from one of the mainly agricultural and impoverished villages of the area added.

"The Dostum soldiers attacked villages, killed children and old men, and they have taken away hundreds of women to heir bases," said Abdul Latif, a refugee in the Rauza Camp.

Nevertheless, Dostum's forces have gained a fearsome reputation in over 17 years of war in Afghanistan, earning the nickname "Gllim Jam" or carpet thieves, when they reportedly looted Kabul's carpet bazaar during fighting between rival mujahideen factions.

"The Frontier Post", December 3, 1996

Tehran (DPA) - Iran plans to help reconstruction of Afghanistan after the country has achieved peace, President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani on Thursday told ousted Afghan President, Tehran radio reported.

"Once peace is achieved, Iran will start widespread efforts to help Afghanistan in development and reconstruction," Rafasanjani told Burhanunddin Rabbani, who arrived here on Thursday. Rabbani in return said, "He hopes peace will soon return to his country."

A pact is to be signed in Northern Afghanistan within the next few days between members of the anti-Taliban alliance. The deal is believed by political observers to b at the top of the agenda of the talks between Rafsanjani and Rabbani.

"The Frontier Post", December 7, 1996

Beside professional prostitutes, some Afghan women were forced by circumstances to sell their bodies to make both ends meet. Their power-hungry leaders and commanders are responsible for pushing them into the flesh trade because continued fighting in Kabul and elsewhere in the war-ravaged country has killed their breadwinners and destroyed their homes.

Women who lived in purdah had to come out to beg or prostitute their bodies to feed themselves and their children.

The News, November 3, 1995

It remains a fact that from 1992 to 1996, the Northern Alliance was a

symbol of massacre, systematic rape and pillage. Which is why we - and I include the US State Department - welcomed the Taliban when they arrived in Kabul. The Northern Alliance left the city in 1996 with 50,000 dead behind it. Now its members are our foot soldiers. Better than Mr bin Laden, to be sure. But what - in God's name- are they going to do in our name?

"The Independent" (UK), November 14, 2001

These U.S. allies are rapists. As early as 1996, the U.S. State Department's own report on human rights in Afghanistan concluded that the forces led by (the now lionized) Ahmed Shah Massoud systematically raped and killed Hazzara women in Kabul in March 1995: "Massood's troops went on a rampage, systematically looting whole streets and raping women."

Since their return to power, Northern Alliance forces have returned to their old habits...

Gary Leupp, "CounterPunch.org", July 19, 2002

It is, of course, richly ironic that the first achievement of the war on terrorism has been to install in Kabul the Northern Alliance, for whom terrorism has been the entire line of business and way of life for more than 20 years. Re-enthroning Northern Alliance President Rabbani - who has been fighting against any form of secular modernisation of his country, however moderate, since the early 1970s - was on no one's list of aims on September 12.

"The Guardian", November 16, 2001

The Americans gave each warlord tens of thousands of dollars in cash and truckloads of weapons. "We were reaching out to every commander that we could," a CIA official told the Wall Street Journal during the war. In other words, they bribed them to stop fighting each other and fight the Taliban.

These were the same warlords who, vying for control of Kabul after the Russians left in 1989, pulverised the city, killing 50,000 civilians, half of them in one year, 1994, according to Human Rights Watch. Thanks to the Americans, effective control of Afghanistan has been ceded to most of the same mafiosi and their private armies, who rule by fear, extortion and monopolising the opium poppy trade that supplies Britain with 90% of its street heroin.

In a series of extraordinary reports, the latest published in July, Human Rights Watch has documented atrocities "committed by gunmen and warlords who were propelled into power by the United States and its coalition partners after the Taliban fell in 2001" and who have "essentially hijacked the country". The report describes army and police troops controlled by the warlords kidnapping villagers with impunity and holding them for ransom in unofficial prisons; the widespread rape of women, girls and boys; routine extortion, robbery and arbitrary murder. Girls' schools are burned down.

For 17 years, Washington poured $4bn into the pockets of some of the most brutal men on earth - with the overall aim of exhausting and ultimately destroying the Soviet Union in a futile war.

"The Guardian", September 18, 2003

Armed units of the Northern Alliance, local commanders, and rogue individuals were responsible for political killing, abduction, kidnapping for ransom, torture, rape, arbitrary detention, and looting.

The US Department of State report on Afghanistan, 2001

The West's new Afghan friends in the war against terrorism and the Taliban are a curious lot. They include Islamic fundamentalists, vitriolic anti-Americans, human-rights violators, one-time allies of Osama bin Laden and.... In 1992, for instance, when Rabbani, Sayyaf, Massood and other mujahideen finally captured the country's cosmopolitan capital, Kabul, one of their first acts was to ban the use of female newsreaders on television.

"The Toronto Star", October 7, 2001

Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the Pashtun fundamentalist, shelled the city for two years, destroying half its buildings and killing 25,000 civilians because he thought the Tajik wing of the mojahedin "alliance" was not offering him enough power. A year later, Ahmed Shah Massoud, lionised abroad as the greatest leader of the anti-communist and anti-Taliban resistance, turned his guns on his Shi'ite Hazara allies who were concentrated in the western part of Kabul, killing thousands.

"The Guardian", October 6, 2001

We taught the Mujahideen to topple the pylons. The Soviets resorted to laying anti-personnel mines under them, so we instructed the Mujahideen to throw large stones underneath to set off any mines before laying the charges — a simple, but effective method. Our biggest success was in 1984 when we succeeded in destroying eighty pylons in one night in the Sarubi-Kabul sector.

The CIA had provided me with a series of excellent satellite photographs of dozens of enemy posts within a 20-kilometre radius of Kabul. With the aid of these I set about renewed planning. It was at this time that General Akhtar came up with the idea of a concerted attack to capture a part of Kabul and hold it for up to 36 hours… I asked for time to study the proposal, but the General had mentioned it to Hekmatyar and Sayaf, both of whom were enthusiastic, provided they got more heavy weapons, so I was ordered to discuss plans in detail immediately.

I was never able to coordinate truly joint attacks on Kabul, although I believe I created this impression to the enemy by a system of briefing numerous Commanders to carry out operations against targets from multiple directions during the same period.

I called a conference in Peshawar to discuss the problems… I had resolved to go into Afghanistan myself to coordinate the assault, and to send in several Pakistani teams of advisers with various Commanders.

All my men going into Afghanistan had plenty of time to prepare themselves and the Mujahideen they would be accompanying… By this time the trainers had grown beards, were dressed as Mujahideen, so that they were indistinguishable from their guerrilla companions… Their duties included giving guidance on all aspects of military operations or duties to the Commander, training the Mujahideen in their operational bases, assisting with defensive measures for the bases, helping the Commander to plan and carry out his special tasks and, if necessary, fighting. It was then a firm principle that every Commander must belong to one of the seven Parties, otherwise he got nothing from us at ISI - no arms, no ammunition and no training. Without these he could not exist, so he joined a Party, provided he could find one to accept him.

In 1987 the broad percentages allocated to the Parties were Hekmatyar 18-20 per cent, Rabbani 18-19 per cent, Sayaf 17-18 per cent, Khalis 13-15 per cent, Nabi 13-15 per cent, Gailani 10-11 per cent, and Mujaddadi trailing with

3-5 per cent. Certainly the Fundamentalists came out on top with 67-73 per cent.

The Mujahideen could achieve nothing without financial support No matter how brilliant my strategy might be, the implementation depended on the availability of a vast reservoir of cash with which to arm, train and move my forces. Almost half of this money originated from the US taxpayer, with the remainder coming from the Saudi Arabian government or rich Arab individuals.

Notwithstanding all I have said, on balance the CIA's contributions have played a vital role in the conduct of the Afghan Jehad. Without the backing of the US and Saudi Arabia the Soviets would still be entrenched in that Country. Without the intelligence provided by the CIA many battles would have been lost, and without the CIA's training of our Pakistani instructors the Mujahideen would have been fearfully ill-equipped to face, and ultimately defeat, a superpower.

General Akhtar had an obsession with Kabul. He was adamant that attacks on Kabul should have priority over all others. If a Commander made known to the general that he wanted heavy weapons to hit the city, then he was well on the way to getting them, even if I was opposed. Keeping the pressure on the capital was the fundamental theme of our strategy. If Kabul fell we had won the war - it was as simple as that.

Because of its importance the majority of the Pakistani teams of advisers were used against Kabul… Of the eleven teams sent in that year seven were used against Kabul…

Because of our lack of an effective answer to the helicopter gunship we always had to carry out our rocket attacks at night… I wanted to be able to hit the city by day as well, but it was not until 1986 that we were able to do so.

If we had ceased to attack Kabul because of the possibility of hitting civilians it would have pulled the carpet from under our fundamental strategy.

Hekmatyar has never been forgiven by the US for his public refusal to meet President Reagan during a 1985 visit to New York to address the UN. It was seen as a major slap in the face for America who was supplying so much money to keep the fight going, yet here was a Mujahideen leader spurning the hand that fed him. Hekmatyar came under great pressure to relent, including telephone calls from other Leaders in Pakistan, who told him bluntly that he was doing enormous damage to the cause of Jehad in the West. He was unmoved. His

argument was that to be seen having talks with Reagan would be playing into the hands of the KGB and Soviet propaganda, which claimed the war was not a Jehad, but rather an extension of US foreign policy. KGB and KHAD agents forever emphasized that the Americans were paying for Afghan to fight Afghan, making the Mujahideen not Soldiers of God but American stooges. Hekmatyar could not, or more likely would not, understand why US aid had to be so public. He knew he had to accept it, but wanted it covert, deniable, not obvious for the whole world to see. For him, like many Afghans, it was humiliating to acknowledge publicly his indebtedness to a non-Muslim. America's apparent craving for gratitude was incomprehensible. It does appear to indicate a general lack of understanding on the part of the U S in its dealings with the East. Aid donations are publicized so much that the receiver loses face and becomes resentful rather than grateful.

Further meetings were convened and, after protracted talks had failed to reach agreement, Zia's patience snapped, and he issued a directive at 2.00 am - the Parties were to form a Seven-Party Alliance and issue a joint announcement to that effect within 72 hours… The Leaders were well aware that without Pakistan's, and that meant Zia's, backing, everything was finished… the new Alliance was established.

I feel the Fundamentalists were correct in their assessment of American motives, but foolish to make their opinions so obvious, as without full US support the Jehad did not, and still cannot, succeed.

(Molvi Nabi) is a weak Leader, who leaves the running of Party affairs to his two sons, both of whom have been accused of retaining funds due to Commanders. The eldest son was involved in the Quetta incident mentioned earlier (fraud, bribery and buying and selling of arms between the ISI and the parties). Gailani is a soft-spoken, liberal democrat, fond of an easy life, who spends a considerable time abroad. He is not a forceful leader and seems to have little control over his Party bureaucracy. (Mujaddadi) appears to be let down by his deputies and Party officials, over whom he seems to have little influence. Their dubious activities have now brought the Party into disrepute.

Nabi's Party was a prime culprit in this respect. Despite having great potential… Nabi and his officials never seemed able to improve their efficiency. In marked contrast was Sayaf, whose warehouses invariably held the minimum

of stocks, although I must admit he had the singular advantage of receiving generous extra financial aid direct from rich Arab supporters.

"Bear Trap- Afghanistan's Untold Story", By Brigadier (Retd.) Mohammad Yousaf

According to Reuters heavy fighting between Rabbani and Hekmatyar has restarted since September 5th but this time even more deadly and destructive. Rockets attack have killed 83 people in Kabul. In Shodara Rabbani's forces killed Haq Nazar a commander of Dustom along 12 of his men. Radio Kabul reported of heavy fighting in Maidan and Ghor provinces. On September 8, because of rocketing by Gulboddin-Dustom 53 people were killed and injured in Kabul. Rabbani-Masood's plane bombed Hekmatyar-Dustom's positions in Tapae Maranjan and Karte Now killing many people. After Rabbani's air raid on Hekmatyar's postion in Charasiab last week, Hekmatyar-Dustom also have intense their attacks against Rabbani forces.

Based on Reuter's report on September 9, Hekmatyar-Dustom forces have continued advancing on both sides, while Rabbani's regime and commander Panah on September 11, confessed their defeat and retreat in Khenjan. Dustom's forces on the other hand have moved 20 Kilometers towards Salang and from the heights of Salang have bombed Masood's military positions in Jabal Saraj. On the South side Hekmatyar's forces have advanced and fighting around Tapae Maranjan and Balahisar is continued. From economic point of view, all the high ways are in the control of Rabbani's rivals and Arean planes also can not fly. With the capturing of Khenjan by rival forces, the high way to Sher Khan Port which Rabbani was using for satisfying his military needs from abroad, can not be used any more by him.

According to Reuter on September 12, Rabbani-Masood's planes have bombed Hekmatyar-Dustom's positions in south Kabul. Heavy fightings were going on around Tapae Maranjan and Balahisar today. Rabbani's radio claimed to have arrested and executed ten men belonging to Dustom in Fariab.

Based on Reuters' report on September 13, 1994 as a result of seven rocket

fired as near as 50 meters to previous embassy of United Kingdom (now embassy of Pakistan) and another rocket fired at a residence, Seema a 14 year old girl was killed and her mother and other family members were injured. Reuters says it is still unknown which group has fired the rockets towards the former UK and current Pakistani embassy. It is believed that since Rabbani-Masood and Pakistani government are not in good terms, these rockets were launched by Shora-e Nizar. A man whose house was hit by a rocket told reporters that western countries carelessly armed these groups in the past and now too don't care how this country is destroyed by these warlords. He who introduced himself as Asad added: "How long more Afghans should suffer like this? US is claiming a lot about human rights but regarding Afghanistan she is deaf." In the same report it is quoted from radio Kabul that Rabbani's forces in Samangan have killed ten, injured 11 and arrested 15 of Dustom's men. It is heard that both sides after inhumanly torturing the detainees, have executed them for being Uzbek or Panjsheri.

According Reuters, September 15, 1994 tense fighting between two Shiite parties in the west part of Kabul resulted in heavy casualties, in two days 35 people killed and more than 230 were injured. Mohammad Mohsni's group being provoked by Wahabi Sayyaf and support of Rabbani-Masood once again started fighting Hizb-e-Wahdat a puppet of Iran and supported by Gulboddin-Dustom in Kotae Sangi and Dashte Barchi region, have fired hundreds rockets on each other. Because of a rocket attack on wedding party 11 people were killed and 15 were injured. Rabbani-Masood's planes have bombed Hizb-e-Wahdat positions in Kotae Sangi, Dashte Barchi and Jamal Mina.

According to a foreign doctor the average number of injured people in the recent fighting between two Shiite parties brought to hospital is 145 daily and the number is gone above 700 in the last five days. The exact number of killed people is unknown but it is estimated around 200. BBC Pashto section reported on September 19, 1994. The same report says that Selo's building is repeatedly hit by rockets and Mohsni's Harkat forces clami to have captured four positions of Hizb-e-Wahdat. In past four days no traffic was seen in Dehmazang area and it is under the rocket and artillery attacks of both sides. Mohsni's Harakat spokesman said that their forces had to leave Darulaman because of pressure

from Hizb-e-Wahdat. Government's spokesman also confirmed this but Haraka's spokesperson later claimed to have recaptured Darulaman… BBC said around 700,000 people have fled from Kabul city. The report adds quoting from Rabbani regimes' war spokesman who said: "government supported Harakat because Wahdat intense its attacks against Harakat and also had attacked our positions in the front lines." One military officials of Masood in Dehmazang area said: "in order to help Harakat we targeted Wahdat's positions with bullets and other weapons." And the tanks under his command fired at Hizb-e-Wahdat's positons in Dehmazang area some five hundreds meters away from Darulaman road.

BBC Pashto Sevice reported quoting from Tehran's radio that heavy fightings are going on in Kotae Sangi, Dashte Barchi and Dehmazang area and have also spread to Kabul University, resulting in huge casualties. BBC quoted from hospitals and said that more than 1000 people were killed and injured. It added that Hekamatyar's forces have attacked Mohsni Harakat's stores in Tapae Taj Baig area and sever fighting continues. Meanwhile Dustom's planes have attacked Harakat and Rabbani Regime's positions around Kabul on September 20. According to Radio Iran people of the west of Kabul (Kotae Sangi, Dehmazang etc) protested standing on the roofs of their homes and wanted cease fire so that they can burry the killed ones and treat the injured people.

Meanwhile Rabbani-Masood's Jet planes bombed Hekamayar-Dustom's positions on September 20 in Tapae Taj Baig area, correspondingly Dustom's planes bombed Rabbani's positions in the center of the city.

BBC Pashto Service on September 22 reported quoting from hospitals that the number of those killed in the last few days fightings reached to 1064 and injured ones to 350. Rockets and artillery have hit the heart of the city in one place killing 6 people and injuring 50 and in another killing 4 and injuring 14. Rooms and halls of Kabul's two hospitals (Jamhoriat and Wazir Akbar Khan) were packed with injured people needed urgent treatment. An armored vehicle belonging to Masood brought an wounded man of Shora-e- Nizar into the hall near the operation theater where a woman was laying with her one foot blown up on one side and another person was calling his son unaware that he was death. All shops are closed and there is no traffic or even pedestrians seen on

the streets in Kabul city. Despite war between two Shiite rivals with the support of other groups, none of them can claim victory on the other. Rabbani-Masood's have attacked Wahdat's positions with heavy weaponry and lately Wahabi Sayyaf's forces too have targeted Wahdat's positions.

"Afghanistan Mirror", Issue 41 (September 1994)

On September 28, 1994 BBC Pashto Service reported that because of rocket attacks on Tuesday 58 people were killed and 224 were injured. According to the reports reached Mosoris United Nations representative, because of a rocket attack on wedding hall 40 people were killed and 70 were injured and in another rocket which hit a street, killed 8 people. Mosoris said that rival factions involved in fighitings have no emotions left for suffering and disaster of people. And they have shown deaf ears to the repeated demands of UN and other countries of the world for cease fire and starting talks for peace. He added that once more I would like to inform the leaders of rival factions about the recent demand of UN general secretary for cease fire and starting talks, with a hope that they will refrain from war and will be ready to have discussions.

"Afghanistan Mirror", Issue 42 (October 1994)

October 22, BBC Pashto Section- Heavy fighting continued yesterday and today around Kabul University. The University has been exchanged several times among the rival factions so far. Yesterday Mazari's forces attacked from Engineering Faculty and were in advance during the day. Today Mazari's forces have recaptured the University and Rabbani's government has admitted their defeat in the university area. Face to face fighting was so sever that there was no chance to pick up tens of dead bodies lied on university compound. Meanwhile united North forces have taken the biggest Scaad base from Masood-Sayyaf forces. In this base there is a big number of Scud rockets with technical equipments. United Forces today had more attention towards Sakhi Mountain and its hill. And they not only had air raid on Television Mountain but also used rockets and other artillery against it. Rabbani's forces use Sakhi Mountain and Television Mountain to bomb Shiite residential areas and Hekmatyar's bases. It is said that in the fighting between two rivals in the university area almost 800 people have been killed and injured.

October 24, BBC Pashto Section- Following the heavy fighting three days ago, Rabbani-Masood forces have started another war to retake the university as result of which 50 people were killed and 160 injured most of who were residents of the area. A source of Red Cross said that in the government bases at least 70 were killed or injured. Gulboddin-Shiite forces are still bombing Rabbani's bases. Rabban's soldiers said that yesterday we killed ten men of Wahdat Party whose bodies are still lying in university area. Engineering faculty and the laboratory are totally destroyed and the reference section of the library which was hit by several rockets is turned into ashes and the rest of the building has damaged hugely.

Today too sounds of bullets and other weapons were heard and the people living around the university were making arrangements to escape. Gulboddin's forces in Eastern part of Dehmazang have control over Cinema Barikot and Russains former cultural center, while Rabbani's forces fired at united forces from Dehmazang Mountain and Television Mountain. On the other hand today 24 October, Kabul city once again was under the rocket attacks by Gulboddin which killed 20 people in Kolola Poshta when a rocket hit a city bus. Shoes with blood on them and some other belongings were put for identification of dead bodies. From October 20, till today, during four days the number of dead and injured people reaches to more than 1000. Today's rocket attack took place when Gulboddin was on his way to Srobi to meet Mahmood Mestri.

"Afghanistan Mirror", Issue 43 (October 1994)

Jehadi rules imposed on Afghan women as reported by UN special rapporteur

72. The Special Rapporteur's attention has been drawn to the Ordinance on the Women's Veil, which is reported to have been issued by a nine-member professional committee of the High Court of the Islamic State of Afghanistan and which reads as follows:

"A denier of veil is an infidel and an unveiled woman is lewd".

Conditions of wearing veil:

1. The veil must cover the whole body.
2. Women's clothes must not be thin.
3. Women's clothes must not be decorated and colourful.
4. Women's clothes must not be narrow and tight to prevent the seditious limbs from being noticed. The veil must not be thin.
5. Women must not perfume themselves. If a perfumed woman passes by a crowd of men, she is considered to be an adulteress.
6. Women's clothes must not resemble men's clothes.

In addition,

1. They must not perfume themselves.
2. They must not wear adorning clothes.
3. They must not wear thin clothes.
4. They must not wear narrow and tight clothes.
5. They must cover their entire bodies.
6. Their clothes must not resemble men's clothes.
7. Muslim women's clothes must not resemble non-Muslim women's clothes.
8. Their foot ornaments must not produce sound.
9. They must not wear sound-producing garments.
10. They must not walk in the middle of streets.
11. They must not go out of their houses without their husband's permission.
12. They must not talk to strange men.
13. If it is necessary to talk, they must talk in a low voice and without l aughter.
14. They must not look at strangers.
15. They must not mix with strangers."

24. The former Pol-i-Charkhi Central Prison reportedly continues to be empty. There are also private prisons to which the Special Rapporteur and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) have not had access.

The Special Rapporteur received information from reliable sources

concerning the location of a number of such prisons in the area of Kabul and some provinces.

Some members of the former KHAD (secret police) personnel are reportedly now in the service of certain political parties and armed groups.

43. The fighting in Kabul picked up with intensity at the end of June 1994. In July, ICRC reported that more than 4,000 persons have been killed and 21,000 wounded in the city since 1 January 1994. On 16 August 1994, ICRC issued a press release in which it indicated that bombing raids and artillery exchanges had increased in frequency and intensity and that even hospitals had come under indiscriminate fire.

According to its estimates, some 100 people had been killed and 900 wounded in Kabul during a 10-day period. In a press release issued on 29 September, ICRC indicated that Karte Seh, one of the city's main hospitals, had been hit by a rocket on 22 September, when two children were killed and 10 people were wounded, among them six children. The same press release stated that 17,000 persons, mostly civilians, had been wounded in Kabul since the beginning of September. During the conflict at the end of September opposing two Afghan Shiah Muslim factions, 1,000 persons are believed to have been killed in only five days. The continuous fighting, shelling and rocketing has forced a considerable part of the population of Kabul to flee the capital.

44. During his visit to the area in September 1994, the Special Rapporteur had the opportunity to see photographs testifying to the destruction of the museum and to speak with a person who knows the museum well and has visited it recently. It is believed that the museum was looted before being hit by artillery fire. , it has been reported that the national archives were looted on 12 May 1994.

92. The various parties and other factions in Afghanistan operate private security forces, often having as their members former KHAD (secret police) personnel.

Parts of the interim report on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan prepared by Mr. Felix Ermacora, Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights, in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1994/84 of 9 March 1994, and Economic and Social Council decision 1994/268 of 25 July 1994

Summits from the book "I" is for Infidel by Kathy Gannon

I understand his fear. The topic of our conversation is dangerous one. Karim was in Jalalabad in May 1996 when Osama bin Laden arrived from Sudan. He knows the details of his arrival, details that implicate powerful men in today's Afghanistan, men who sit with Afghan president Hamid Karzai, who are welcomed at the heavily fortified U.S. Embassy in Kabul to meet the U.S. ambassador in Afghanistan. These men were returned to positions of power by United States and its coalition partners in 2001, men like Abdul Rasul Sayyaf.

One August day in 2004, when I was having breakfast with Hamid Karzai on the lush green lawns of the presidential palace in Kabul, he described Sayyaf as an ideologue in a way that sounded complimentary. But Sayyaf is a vicious man, whose followers have carried out unspeakable atrocities and horrific massacres of Afghanistan's ethnic Hazaras.

Abdul Rasul Sayyaf inspires violence in others: Abu Sayyaf, a Philippine terrorist organization, was named for him by its founder, Abdurajak Janjalani. Janjalani was a disciple and student of Sayyaf's who received military training form him. The Indonesian Mohammed Nasir Bin Abbas, alias Solaiman, who was arrested in Indonesia in April 2003, was trained under Sayyaf between 1987 to 1991.

Bin Abbas used the terrorist training he received from Sayyaf to set up Camp Hodeibia in the Philippines, according to Maria Ressa's account in *Seeds of Terror* (New York: 2003). This camp was later taken over by Umar Patek, an Indonesian who has been implicated in the 2002 bombing on the resort island of Bali in which more than 200 people were killed.

A report put together from information collected by more than one Western intelligence agency and revealed by the newspaper *Al Watan Al Arabi* tells of a particularly terrifying meeting held soon after bin Laden's arrival in Afghanistan, before the Taliban took power and while Sayyaf and his mujahedeen colleagues were ruling the country.

My friend Karim had also heard the details of the meeting, although he hadn't been present at it. It was convened in the northwest Pakistan's remotest tribal regions, tucked away on an arid plateau surrounded by hills and guarded by hundreds of men hidden in the trees and crevices of the mountains.

The high-level secret meeting brought together some of the most radical of groups and nations, who accused the West then in 1996, a full five years before the September 11 attacks, of waging a war against Islam.

The participants urged a counteroffensive and spoke of attacking the United States and the West. They spoke of their hatred for the West and their revulsion for governments in the Middle East that sympathized with the West.

Fundamentalist organizations in Egypt, Yemen, Iran, and other Gulf states were represented, as were militant groups from Pakistan, Algeria and Sudan. They sat beside dissidents who lived in London, Algeria, and Beirut. They had come together to plot a war against American and Western interests.

This was not their first gathering. There had been at least one earlier meeting in Iran to lay the ground for this gathering, to settle religious and ideological differences that would allow these men to come together to wage a single war against a single enemy-the West.

And so a huge tent was pitched on the high plateau, under watchful guard of the sentries in the ring of hills. A noisy generator provided light.

Men arrived in four-wheel-drive vehicles that had rumbled up the tortuous roads. The first to arrive was Osama bin Laden's lieutenant, Aymen al-Zawahri. The conversation focused on Benjamin Netanyahu's rise to power in Israel. One man, who seemed to have come from a European country, spoke of a vicious offensive being readied against Islam.

The men talked for another two hours until Osama bin Laden joined the gathering. At his side was Abdul Rasul Sayyaf. It was Sayyaf who spoke first. Bin Laden listened. Sayyaf shared bin Laden's revulsion for U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia. He praised the violent bombing one month earlier in al-Khubar in Saudi

Arabia that had killed more than twenty U.S. servicemen, for which al Qaeda had been held responsible. Sayyaf's small brown eyes seemed to glow as he recounted the bombing. He reveled in the description of it, saying it should be lesson to America to withdraw its troops from Saudi Arabia. He likened it to the 1981 and 1983 bombing in Beirut of the U.S. Embassy and its military compound that had killed hundreds of the U.S. soldiers and led to the American withdrawal from Lebanon.

Sayyaf's speech inspired an Iranian to call for an all-out offensive against America. He was facing its gravest conspiracy. It wasn't clear whether he had been sent by the government or whether he represented a jihadi group.

The men talked into the night. As dawn broke, a man from London looked to Sayyaf for direction. What should they do? What strategy should be adopted?

Sayyaf's voice was low. "Let us wait until this evening, when we resume our discussions. I will then speak and give my opinion as one who believes in what you believe and who is ready to fight in the same trench as you."

When they reconvened, it was brief, the decision firm. They would confront the United States and the West. The organizations at the meeting would work together, they would devise strategies, plots, coordinate. In this way, in mid-1996, high in the lawless tribal lands of northern Pakistan, the terrorist networking began.

After the meeting, Sayyaf returned to Kabul to resume his role in the mujahedeen-led government of Afghanistan, a government that owed its existence to the support it had received from America.

As I sat across from Karim in the noisy hotel coffee shop in Peshawar, I began fully to understand his fear. Sayyaf's men had been among those who had welcomed bin Laden to Afghanistan in 1996, along with others from that mujaheden government who had also been returned to power by the United States in 2001. These same men had encouraged and allowed terrorist training camps when they in power from 1992 until 1996. They had lied to the CIA in

September 1996 when the agency had requested their help in finding bin Laden. The CIA's intelligence was so flawed that it wrongly said that the Taliban brought bin Laden to Afghanistan in 1996 and that the Taliban's leader, Mullah Mohammed Omar, knew bin Laden before he came to Afghanistan in 1996. He didn't. It was Abdul Sayyaf, America's "ally," who had welcomed bin Laden.

I worried for him (Karim). He knew who had been present at a series of April 1996 clandestine meetings among the mujahedeen, meetings held in lantern-lit rooms to discuss giving Bin Laden sanctuary in Afghanistan. Then Sudan, under relentless pressure from the United States, wanted bin Laden gone.

A friend of Karim's went to Khartoum to meet bin Laden. Karim's voice dropped to barely a whisper as he recalled the conversations. I strained to listen.

My friend met Osama. Osama had a question. He said to my friend: "I have more problems with America and the problems that Sudan has today with America; maybe tomorrow Afghanistan will have these problems and what will your reaction be?" My friend didn't have an answer for him. He had to return to Jalalabad and ask the mujahedeen.

The mujahedeen knew that America wanted Osama, but they didn't mind. They called a shura [council meeting of elders] and the shura gave its decision: "Afghanistan had had twenty years of war. It has been destroyed by all these wars and fighting. We have thousands of problems and if Osama is one more problem, what is that? He is a Muslim. We should help. What are problems for Afghans? God will solve all our problems. Tell him to come."

Among the key figures at the shura that April day in 1996 were lieutenants of Sayyaf and of other mujahedeen leaders, who today hold positions of power in Afghanistan.

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An Afghan Red Cross worker told me she said good-bye to her husband and young son each morning, never sure they would be alive when she returned.

Each time she heard the thud of and incoming rocket, her heart sank and she whispered a prayer: "Please, God, please keep my family safe."

Rockets could be heard from a distance, but still I thought the mujahedeen government was in control of the city. Their collapse didn't seem imminent and I went looking for someone to talk to, perhaps from the Afghan Foreign Ministry or from the Defense Ministry. I found Dr. Abdullah, the foreing minister. He has always seemed more diplomat than warrior, although he. has spent all his time at the side of Ahmed Shah Massood. Abdullah had the uncanny ability of knowing and saying what foreigners want to hear, regardless of whether it's true.

He insisted that the mujahedeen fighters would not be defeated. His exact words were: "We will fight until our last drop of blood." I should have known then that their defeat was imminent because in Afghanistan that promise was generally made just before a hasty retreat.

After so many years covering Afghanistan, I now understand what Afghan leaders really mean when they talk about shedding the last drop of blood. They certainly don't mean their own. It is usually the blood of innocent civilians caught in the cross fire. When leaders' lives are threatened, their first inclination is to beat a hasty retreat.

That day in Kabul, behind his angry bluster, Dr. Abdullah was getting ready to run. He railed against Pakistan for supporting the Taliban and against the United States, accusing America of propping up the Taliban.

It was a ludicrous mistake to hand over Kabul to the Mujahedenn. It set in motion the chaos that would eventually bring the Taliban to power. But the international community wasn't looking to Afghanistan's future. It wanted out.

And so Afghanistan was handed over to the fractious, feuding mix of tribal warlords, who had been elevated to the status of mujahedeen factional leaders to fight the Soviet Union.

Their stature had been enhanced by the billions of dollars and weapons they had received from the United States and the rest of the world.

Their relentless internecine killings, their bloodletting over religious and tribal differences was ignored and they were given Kabul.

Afghanistan's first prime minister after Najibullah was Gulbudin Hekmatyar, a towering Pashtun, whose Hezb-e-Islami faction had provided some of the strongest guerrilla fighters against the Soviet soldiers. Hekmatyar, was also the biggest opportunist among the leaders, and he would use religion, money, and guns all to achieve the same end – power. Hekmatyar was a radical Islamist, rarely hiding his loathing of the West and the United States even while he was the biggest recipient of U.S. dollars. As long as Hekmatyar's people killed Soviet soldiers, Washington decided to overlook his stream of anti-Western rhetoric.

Hekmatyar's biggest rival was Ahmed Shah Massood, Afghanistan's first post-Communist defense minister and an ethnic Tajik…. He was a pragmatic man who brokered truces with the Soviet forces and, in the early years of the Soviet invasion, cleansed ethnic Pashtuns from the valleys of the Hindu Kush Mountains of his homeland in order to solidify his power base in the north by ensuring that the Tajiks were unchallenged. He made hundreds of millions of dollars from the lucrative emerald and lapus lazuli mines.

Massood held radical Islamic beliefs, was known to punish his men for not praying; his closest ally among the other mujahedeen leaders was Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, a radical Islamist who was tight with the Arab militants.

The only radical to Massood for full control northern Afghanistan was Abdul Rashid Dostum, an ethnic Uzbek, who remained a loyal Communist general under Najibullah until it seemed certain Najibullah would step down. His viciousness was legendary in Afghanistan.

These were the men the world installed in Kabul when Najibullah stepped down in April 1992. They were the mujahedeen "government."

They collided disastrously during their four years in power. It's a painful journey into those four years of Afghanistan's past, when the world handed a vibrant, intact Kabul over to the mujahedeen leaders, who destroyed it. But knowing the history of the early 1990s is essential because so many of the survivors of that era have recently been returned to power.

Some have even been transformed into heroes. But among the Afghan mujahedeen leadership, there were no heroes.

To find a hero in Afghanistan you have to look to the 26 millions ordinary Afghans.

One front line between mujahedeen groups ran right outside the Kabul Zoo, which in another lifetime had been the best in Asia. The mujahedeen devastated it. They frightened or killed the animals, taking sadistic potshots at the elephants and bears in their compounds, and. One black bear limped balefully after a chunk of shrapnel had been lodged in his burly paw. Rockets periodically slammed into the zoo building, into the cages, into the animals' watering holes.

The old man who ran the zoo throughout the mujahedeen fighting refused to leave his animals.

One particular morning, I decided to count the rockets. It wasn't easy – there were a lot. I tried to distinguish between the incoming rockets fired from Hekmatyar's positions in Charasyab and the nearby hills and the outgoing rockets from Massood's positions on other hills, including one just behind our house. In less than two minutes, I counted nearly 100 rockets.

After a particularly blistering assault, we went to Amir Shah's Hazara neighborhood, where we found a man named Ghulam Jan collapsed over a brightly colored shawl. We couldn't see what was under it. Amir Shah talked to him, tried to comfort him. Sayyaf's men had stormed into the neighborhood and grabbed five women, including Ghulam Jan's wife. Ghulam Jan could barely talk. He threw open the shawl. Inside were long thick bunches of bloodied women's hair. I looked away. Ghulam Jan said Sayyaf's men raped the women, killed them, and then scalped them.

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I was due to return to Pakistan the following morning. But before I left I went back to the apartment, bringing a bag of rice and flour with me. In the

middle of the night, the woman had told me that she wanted to send her young son with me to Pakistan. She too, was afraid, but she didn't want to lose her apartment. But by the time I returned, she had changed her mind. She couldn't bear to be separated from her son. He stayed.

Not much later, maybe three or four months, she and her two children were killed, their throats slit by men who belonged either to Massood's or Sayyaf's faction. They were killed for their apartment.

Such was the anarchy in Kabul during the mujahedeen's rule.

On yet another occasion, and during yet another firefight between rival mujahedeen factions, I returned to the same Macroyan subdivision. Just as I stepped from my vehicle, a volley of incoming rockets landed. I fled, trying to find a place to hide, unable to tell where they were coming from.

A little girl, maybe five years old, stepped out of one of the dirty gray cement buildings onto the stoop. She had come out to play. A rocket suddenly smashed into the ground in front of her. The powerful blast sent shrapnel searing through everything in its path, including the little girl. She died instantly.

The randomness of the violence was appalling. I visited a small boy no more than eight years old in the hospital in Kabul. He had been playing ball in his yard when a rocket smashed into the ground nearby, slicing off his hand at the wrist. Seconds before the rocket hit, he had reached out to catch the ball, and his hand was in midair when a razor-sharp piece of shrapnel sliced it off. When I saw the young boy, he was weeping silently, his tears rolling down his cheeks as his mother tried to comfort him.

Hospitals in Kabul were destroyed. Windows had no glass…. Sometimes operations had to be canceled because there was no anesthetic.

I once watched a man bleed to death on an operating table for lack of electricity and anesthetic.

Land mines littered many neighborhoods in Kabul, placed there by the rival

mujahedeen factions. In a single week in Kabul, as many as fifty people would die or be maimed by them. But the victims were usually the children, who scurried out whenever there was a lull in the fighting to scavenge and collect scrap to sell, or who had been sent by their parents to retrieve some essential items left behind during the heat of a battle. The mujahedeen were maliciously clever. They never booby-trapped the entrance to a home, where even the young knew to be cautious. Instead they would string the trip wire across a second-story staircase or at the entrance to a bedroom.

That thousands of innocent people died daily during the mujahedeen government was explained away one day by Sayyaf, who publicly said it would be better for the mujahedeen to raze Kabul and rebuild it in the image of their version of Islam. If that meant the death of many of the 1 million people living in Kabul, so be it, he said, explaining that they were Communists, or at least sympathizers, otherwise why would they have stayed in the city during Najibullah's rule?

I met Hekmatyar in Charasyab soon after Dostum had switched sides from Massood. I asked Hekmatyar how he could accept an ex-Communist general like Dostum after his reason for viciously rocketing Kabul earlier had been that Dostum was in the capital.

"I change, you change, he changes. Everyone changes," said Hekmatyar without a hint of remorse. That was the extent of his explanation. But some things could never be changed: My mind filled with images of his victims and of the victims of all the mujahedeen leaders: the small children with limbs missing, the bodies mutilated by shrapnel; screaming mothers hugging their dead children; a cyclist ripped apart by shrapnel. There were so many.

The Afghan friend I have called Karim said that it was rumored at the time that bin Laden helped broker the reconciliation between Hekmatyar and Massood soon after his arrival in Afghanistan from Sudan in May 1996. Bin Laden had fought with Sayyaf during the Soviet invasion and so was close to Massood. At the same time, some of the bin Laden's Arab warriors had fought alongside Hekmatyar. Bin Laden had links to both men.

At the time of the reconciliation, bin Laden was in Jalalabad, protected by the mujahedeen government.

In June 1996, Hekmatyar came to Kabul for the first time since the mujahedeen takeover in 1992. He was sworn in as prime minister with due ceremony at the Intercontinental Hotel, which had been badly scarred by the relentless rocketing. It had no electricity or running water.

I watched the parade of unity from a wooden chair at the front of a cavernous hall that been a ballroom during Najibullah's rule. All the mujahedeen leaders were on a stage. I marveled at their lack of conscience. There was Sayyaf, and beside him, Burhanuddin Rabbani, the titular president, who had agreed in 1992 to cede power after four months but held on for four years. As Rabbani's defense minister, Massood kept him in power. Hekmatyar stood by their side. They smiled, even kissed each other on the cheek.

I looked hard at the men on stage and at the couple of hundred men in the hall. Some of their faces I recognized: They were commanders whom I had seen on the front lines, some inside the city, and others on the hills that encircle Kabul. Between them all, they were responsible for the ruin of a once fine city, and for the deaths of more than 50,000 civilians. I thought at time: "Now here is the biggest collection of mass murderers you'll ever get in one place." When I looked around Kabul today, I see many of those same faces.

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The Taliban had become, by 2001, a loathsome repressive regime. But that does not justify or explain why the CIA revised history in order to connect bin Laden and Mullah Omar in those early days of the Taliban movement. The CIA should have known that Osama bin Laden's friends were the men of the Northern Alliance, men like Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, the very men it would later choose to help hunt bin Laden.

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At first, Karzai tried to justify the Taliban: "You don't understand, Kathy. They are mullahs who want to stop the killing and the stealing and the raping by these mujahedeen commanders. They don't want power." At one point he

was even asked by the Taliban to be their representative at the United Nations. Hamid seemed ready to take the posting, but he said that Pakistan had intervened to oppose him.

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The blistering bombing campaign administered by the United States and Britain had driven the Taliban out of Kabul and had allowed the Northern Alliance to walk in. The alliance forces brought with them their militias, who took over the homes abandoned by the Taliban, rampaged through some neighborhoods, and stole from residents. People were frightened. They mostly stayed indoors.

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Several Northern Alliance men had come looking for the American women. One guard recalled the conversation: "Three different times, the militiamen came, and one said: 'Where is the tall, pretty one. Where is she?' And another one said: 'I know there were two young pretty girls. Where are they?' I don't know what they would have done if they had been here. We told them there were gone. The Taliban took them."

I called Heather's father, John. I tried to reassure him that as bizarre as it sounded, his daughter was probably lucky the Taliban had taken them out of Kabul that night.

....I found out later that the U.S. military used that information, and an American security guard at the U.S. Embassy told me that information had saved their lives.

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But the United States had other ideas. It had plans for its soldiers in Iraq. As a result, the United States took its guidance from Northern Alliance leaders who wanted only to regain control of Afghanistan. The United States deployed a force smaller than that of the New York City Police Department and handed Afghanistan over to Northern Alliance militiamen who had personal scores to settle with Pashtuns. The United States asked them to hunt the same al Qaeda

men they had once harbored and gave Afghanistan's ethnic minorities a free pass to hunt down Pashtuns in the name of tracking Taliban. Within six months, most Pashtuns would blame the United States for bringing back warlords and criminals and for making every Pashtun a suspected Taliban.

At the heart of those misguided machinations was Zalmay Khalilzad, the U.S. president's hand-picked envoy to Afghanistan, who choreographed the early U.S. decisions that turned the country over to the Northern Alliance, alienated the Pashtun majority, and caused a lot of angry Pashtuns to realign themselves with whatever was left of the Taliban.

As a result, a movement that was effectively dead in December 2001 would be resuscitated.

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As point man in Afghanistan for both President Bush and Secretary Rumsfeld, Khalilzad made disastrous choices.

He knew the men of the Northern Alliance, yet ignored their murderous history that had given rise to the Taliban; partnered them with U.S. soldiers; declared them the victorious army, although it was U.S. and British air power that had defeated the Taliban; treated Afghanistan as the spoils of war and handed the country to Northern Alliance leaders, who divided it up into fiefdoms; and then enlisted their militias in the hunt for al Qaeda and Taliban.

At the end of the book, the writer explains how the Americans lack information about the regions under the Taliban's control and their opponents' control. They only do what the "Northern Alliance" tells them and the result is disastrous for the people of Afghanistan and make them hating Americans more and more.

She quotes a frustrated U.S. marine commander which shows how badly the US has been deceived by "Northern Alliance": "Our intelligence is zero. We don't know who the bad guy and who is the good guy.

We get a call from one of the Afghan commanders we work with who says that guy is Taliban or that convoy is Taliban or Al-Qaeda convoy. But we don't know. We make few checks. We call the [U.S.] embassy. We try to find out, but then we have to make a decision."

Payam-e-Zan repoter's Interview with Kathy Gannon

Near the compilation of this book, Payam-e-Zan's reporter had an opportunity to have a discussion with Kathy Gannon. Like most of her writings, Kathy, the conscious writer she is, shared some new information with us. We prefer to include a brief translation of the interview in this book.

Q. What do you think about Massoud? How do you view his role in the killings and destruction of Kabul after the 1992 invasion; and Massoud's relations with CIA, which made this criminal a hero and a genius?

Please bear in mind that some people, even a number of Afghan intellectuals, believe that in those years Massoud, as the defense minister had to fight in order to defend Kabul, and that it was Gulbuddin Hekmatyar who was attacking the city with rockets. For those who know Massoud, his ideology, politics and his fundamentalist party, this issue is obvious, but we would want to know your opinion.

A. First off, it was not a matter of defending the city. Massoud and Massoud's men, along with Sayyaf and Sayyaf's men, they killed Hazaras, individuals in neighborhoods and I mean it was a neighborhood-to-neighborhood fight. It was not a matter of defending the city. Initially, when the Mujahideen came to Kabul in 1992, it was Massoud who gave the Interior Ministry, which was under a Hazara, to Sayyaf and here the fighting began. Mazari went over to Hekmatyar. The reality was, in Kabul then, it was about power. Massoud wanted power, Hekmatyar wanted power. Massoud and Sayyaf's men were ruthless. No, did not matter at all, whether good, bad, or anything. Massoud was allied with Dostum when they came to Kabul and a year later, he was fighting him.

Hamid Karzai, himself told me, he said to Massoud, please go down to Qandahar and to Pashtun areas. Please bring the Pashtuns in. Distribute power equally; but no, he brought in more Tajiks. This whole bloodshed was about power and maintaining power. Rabbani came to power because of Massoud and Sayyaf's assistance and he was supposed to rule for four months, but his rule continued for four years. How did he continue his rule? With Massoud and

Sayyaf's help. That's how he continued his rule. I mean the claim of defending the city is just ridiculous. From Massoud's side, from Hekmatyar's side, from Dostum's side, from Sayyaf's side, it was about power. Plain and simple. And everybody died. The 50,000 civilians who died, they paid the price of their hunger for power.

In Massoud's era, there was not a single school for girls in Panjsher valley. In the areas he controlled, controlled strongly, there were no equal rights for women. There were no modernizing efforts being made. Who was his greatest ally during this whole thing? It was Sayyaf, who even refused to speak to women. He speaks to women now because of the Taliban. It is the post-Taliban times when he has to, but before that he refused to speak to women. To portray Massoud as a moderate, it's just wrong. It is just altering history. Also building a monument for Massoud in the heart of Kabul where so much destruction exists is insulting, and the evidence is there right near where the monument is. I remember when they started to construct this monument and I talked to Hazaras there. They said they felt sick about it because some of them had lost their mothers, their sisters, their brothers, their fathers. It is like a cruel joke to play on them and rewriting history.

Naturally, CIA paid the Jehadi leaders. The important CIA agent in Pakistan paid Massoud 60,000 USD every month. CIA also funneled great sums of money to Pakistan but they directly paid considerable sums to different commanders, especially to fundamentalist parties of Gulbuddin, Massoud, Sayyaf and Khalis. Among the moderate parties, Mawlawi Nabi's party was a big one but due to his son's uselessness and corruption, it was dissolved.

Q. What you can tell us about the Jehadis' dependency on Pakistan?

A. I lived in Peshawar in 1986 when the CIA paid the Jehadis. All the Jehadi leaders were in Peshawar. They had close links with the ISI. I have myself

witnessed their connections with Pakistan during those years. Their Chinese and Egyptian weapons came through Pakistan but were purchased by the US money and other assistants, so I mean it was clear that they had close links with Pakistan and with Pakistani ISI because that was really the organization that ran the Afghan war with the help of the CIA.

Q. But in Afghanistan, there was another part of the resistance against Russians that never received any money from Pakistan and US?

A. Sure. Pakistan always said that some groups, particularly Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, were the strongest and best able to fight; but in reality, Gulbuddin probably killed more Afghans than he killed Russians. Massoud made deals with the Russians in the mid 80's. For Pakistan, it was about having its allies in Kabul.

Q. What do you know about the current officials who committed crimes during 1992-1996?

A. Sayyaf was involved in crimes. I went to a Hazara's home. Sayyaf's men had scalped the skin from the heads of five women from his family, and killed them (this story is part of Kathy Gannon's book quoted also in this book). Sayyaf's people did not act independent of Sayyaf.

Massoud's people men committed similar crimes (here Kathy is talking about a woman in Microrian who was slaughtered by Massoud's men along with her children and this story is in Kathy's book, also quoted in this book).

I mean you can find any number of different examples of the types of atrocities committed by the people who are back in government today. From what I witnessed, I can say that Sayyaf or Rabbani, Qanouni, Fahim, Abdullah, Salangi or General Daud are no better than the Taliban, in any way.

The list of such people who are actively involved in the government today just goes on. Without a doubt in my mind, they all have to take responsibility and should be held accountable for their crimes.

To hold them up as heroes is really ridiculous and painful.

Q. The Taliban are known for their anti-women policies, do you have any such facts about the Jehadis?

A. The Taliban and these leaders, well they share ideologies, in many ways. I mean Sayyaf's ideology is no different from the Taliban, I say it is worse. Sayyaf holds an extreme interpretation of Islam, as did Massoud, as do so many others. I think the only difference with the Taliban is that people like Sayyaf, Hekmatyar and Rabbani have the desire to see a larger outspread of that very extreme belief, in Afghanistan and outside. Taliban, they wanted it in Afghanistan only. Taliban shut down schools and universities but Sayyaf, Rabbani, Gulbuddin and all these leaders clearly said that doors of schools are gateways to hell. Rabbani and Massoud made Khalis the education minister who said why girls should be educated. Such was the education minister! They insisted that girls and women cover themselves although at that time women used to wear skirts in Kabul. Siddique Chakari was a minister at that time and we had reports that he celebrated burning of books like the Nazis of Germany.

Someone asked Sayyaf why he was killing everybody. He said it would be better if we just turn Kabul to dust because the people were communists anyway. This is the mindset of the people who are back in power.

Q. Criminal Jehadis simply call their atrocities and crimes a "mistake".

A. Rabbani said this. Okay, but you have to be held accountable for the deaths of so many people. Everybody rewrite history. Some people have no idea anymore and believe the Taliban are the only evil ones. Nobody realizes the reality that all the destruction that exists in Kabul today was done by these guys between 92-96. The Taliban did not do it. The people, who blew a little child's arm because he had raised them to catch a ball, are being propagated as heroes today. I mean, the reality is that they killed many people. Somebody has to be held responsible for it. I mean, you want to make them heroes because you hate the Taliban. Well, okay, hate the Taliban but then do not make these people heroes. You cannot say well, at least they are better than the Taliban. Well, sorry they are no better than the Taliban. Sayyaf and Mullah Omar's beliefs are equally extreme; they are no less vicious in their attack on individual rights, on human rights. They cannot be more rigid than the Taliban.

Q. Sayyaf, Gulbuddin, and others allege that the reason behind the 92 onward fighting was foreign interventions. What do you think?

A. There was foreign interference but it was Afghans killing Afghans and it was Gulbuddin Hekmatyar who is an Afghan. Ahmad Shah Massoud is an Afghan. There were Arabs with Gulbuddin but Afghans did the vast majority of killing. Did they get fund from outsiders? Did outsiders incite them? Absolutely. Pakistan, Saudi Arabia funded and incited them; but the ones who pulled the trigger, the ones who wanted power, they were Afghans. So the real reason was not foreign interference. When they took power in 1992, they had massive amounts of weapons from past years. They could have kept up without foreign assistance.

United Sates, Pakistan, Iran and Saudi Arabia supported and funded the fundamentalists more than others so they should be held responsible. However, it was Sayyaf, Rabbani, and Massoud who commanded their forces to commit crimes.

Q. If one day the criminal leaders of Afghanistan are brought to trial in an international court, will you present yourself as a witness?

A. In a heartbeat, if I am called as a witness.

Q. What do you think about the recent report published by the Human Rights Watch?

A. It is very good. I think the Human Rights Watch did a good report but it is not a complete report.

Q. If the" Northern Alliance" criminals had been tried, what effect would it have had on the current situation?

A**.** There was no real investigation during 92-96 about what ,Rabbani's government did, what Massoud did, what Sayyaf did. Dick Cheney, Rumsfeld, Zalamy Khalilzad and others know Sayyaf, Massoud and other leaders.They were fighting against the Taliban but just because they were fighting the Taliban doesn't make them better than the Taliban. The Taliban were not there when Sayyaf brought Osama Bin Laden to Afghanistan with Massoud's help

who was in Kabul at the time. Osama was staying with Haji Qadir's people. Haji Qadir was close to Massoud. Massoud knew very well where Osama Bin Laden was. Haji Qadir gave a speech welcoming Osama Bin Laden at a dinner hosted by Khalis.

Q. How do you view the possibility of the trial of the criminals?

A. I think an international court is better because it gives that independence and the judicial system in Afghanistan is very fragile, it is under developed. If the trail takes place in Afghanistan, there is the possibility that they will easily escape.

Islamabad, January 10, 2007

GLOSSARY

Afghani: Afghanistan's currency: 50 Afghanis = US$1 (According to newly valued Afghanis released in October 2002).

Amr bil Maroof: religious police, Taliban department of Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice. According to UN "The ministry of vice and virtue is the most misogynist department in the whole world".

Burqa: veil (a voluminous head-to-toe covering with a mesh grid over the eyes).

Eid: annual Islamic festival.

Hajj: annual Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca.

Harram: religiously forbidden.

Hejab or **purdah**: Islamic veil.

Hezb-e-Islami (Hekmatyar) (Islamic Party): fundamentalist group led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the former darling of Pakistani militarist circles.

Hezb-e-Islami (Khalis): fundamentalist group led by Yunus Khalis, a splinter group from Hezb-e Islami (Hekmatyar).

Hezb-e-Wahdat Islami (Party of Islamic Unity): a fundamentalist group led by Abdul Ali Mazari during the civil war and supported by Iran. It was later divided into four fragments led prominently by Karim Khalili, Mohammad Mohaqiq and Mohammad Akbari.

ISI: Inter-Services Intelligence, Pakistan.

Ittehad-e-Islami (Islamic Alliance): fundamentalist group led by Abdul Rasool Sayyaf, supported by the Saudis until they found a new darling in the Taliban.

Jamaat-e-Islami (Society of Islam): a Pakistani party led by Qazi Hussain Ahmad, main fundamentalist supporter of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and some other fundamentalist groups in Afghanistan.

Jamiat-e-Islami (Society of Islam): the biggest fundamentalist group in Afghanistan led politically by Burhanuddin Rabbani and commanded militarily by Ahmad Shah Massoud till September 9, 2001. Now Qasim Fahim is the military commander of Jamiat.

Jehadi: a partisan of Jehad (Islamic holy war). After the wave of crimes and atrocities perpetrated by the Jehadis subsequent to the coming to power of their fundamentalist

military-political entities in April 1992, for the ordinary people "Jehadi" denotes the most abhorrent criminals who commit the most heinous crimes and brutalities including gang-rape, willful destruction, carnage, looting etc. in the name of Islam. This epithet is also used to differentiate fundamentalist criminals from Taliban ultra-fundamentalists.

KHAD Khademat-e-Attela'at-e Dowlati (State Intelligence Services): dreaded secret police of the Russian puppet regimes or Afghanistan branch of KGB.

Khalq and **Parcham** ("The People" and "The Banner"): fractions of the pro-Soviet People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan installed in power through a bloody coup on 27 April 1978. Overthrown by the fundamentalists on 28 April 1992.

Mahram: close male relative such as a father, brother or husband.

Loya Jirga (Grand Council): a traditional meeting of elders of all tribes to solve some big problems.

Maulavi: a title for senior members of the Sunni Muslim clergy.

Mujahideen: those who participate in Jehad (Islamic Holy War) "Soldiers of Islam".

Mullah: a title used for a man educated in Islam.

Northern Alliance (or **United Front**): a military alliance comprised of some so-called Jehadi fundamentalist groups that committed hair-raising crimes when they entered Kabul after the fall of the puppet regime of Dr. Najib in 1992. They killed and raped thousands of girls/ women and men. More importantly they were the first who imposed numerous restrictions on women including wearing the veil.

Payam-e-Zan (Women's Message): RAWA's multilingual (Persian/Pashtu/Urdu) magazine published since 1981 - ISSN 1563-8456.

Qazi: judge, especially under Islamic Sharia law.

Ramadan: the ninth month of the Muslim lunar calendar, month of fasting throughout hours of daylight.

Shariat or **Sharia**: Islamic law.

Shura-e-Nezar (Supervisory Council): a military-political semi-autonomous sub-group within Burhanuddin Rabbani's Jamiat-e Islami, led by top gun Ahmad Shah Masoud who was killed in Sep. 9, 2001.

Shura: council.

Taliban (Religious students): an Afghan fundamentalist force supported by Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and the US (USA = planning agency; Saudi Arabia = funding agency; Pakistan = implementing agency).

Hanging of Mohammad Gul, Sher Sikandar and Mohammad Rafeeq in Kabul.
(September 7, 1993)

Books burnt in the yard of the Kabul University
under the supervision of Siddique Chakari

Afshar ruins